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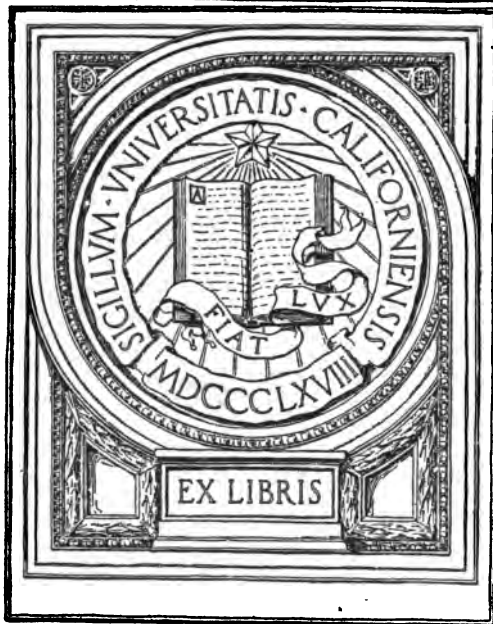
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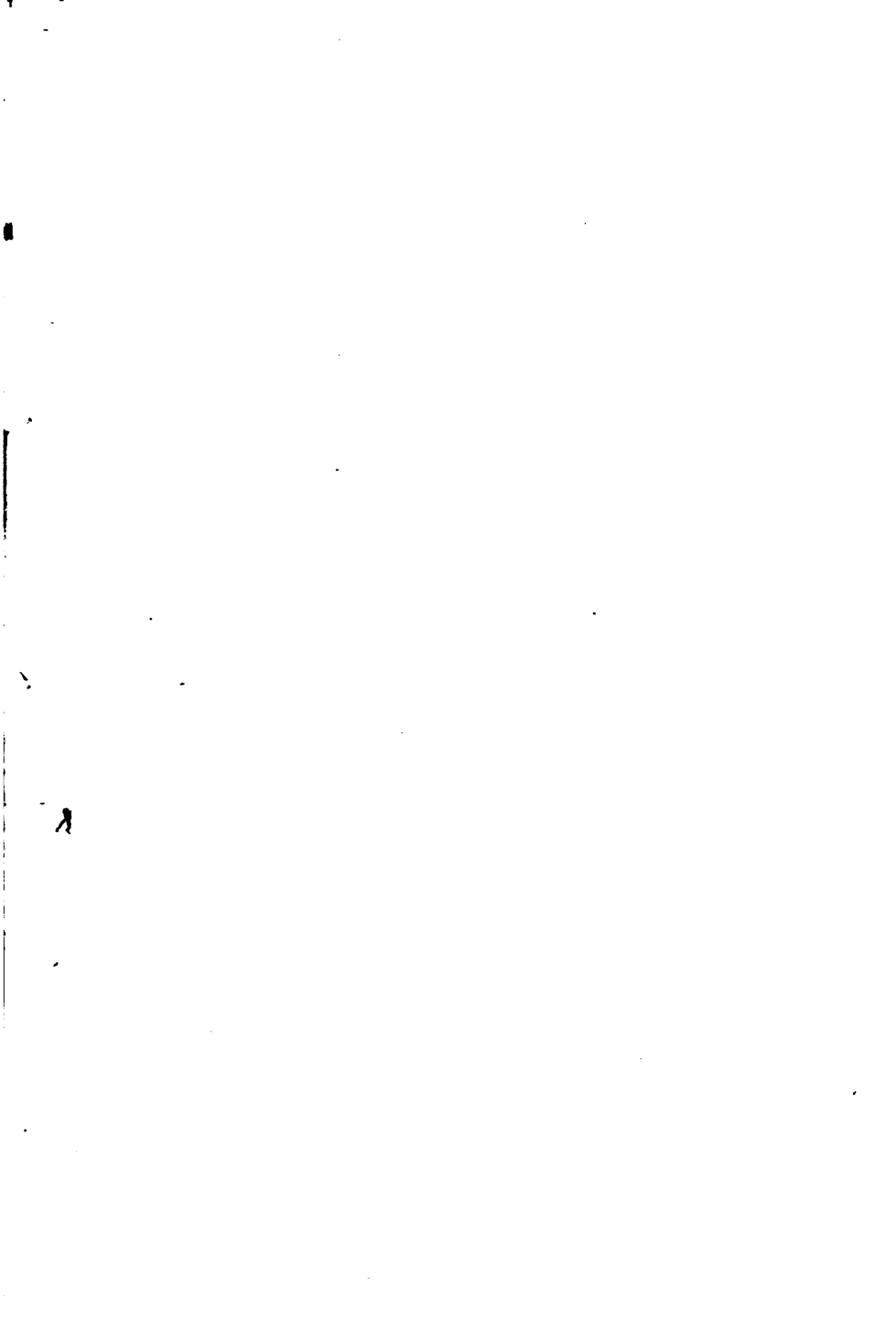
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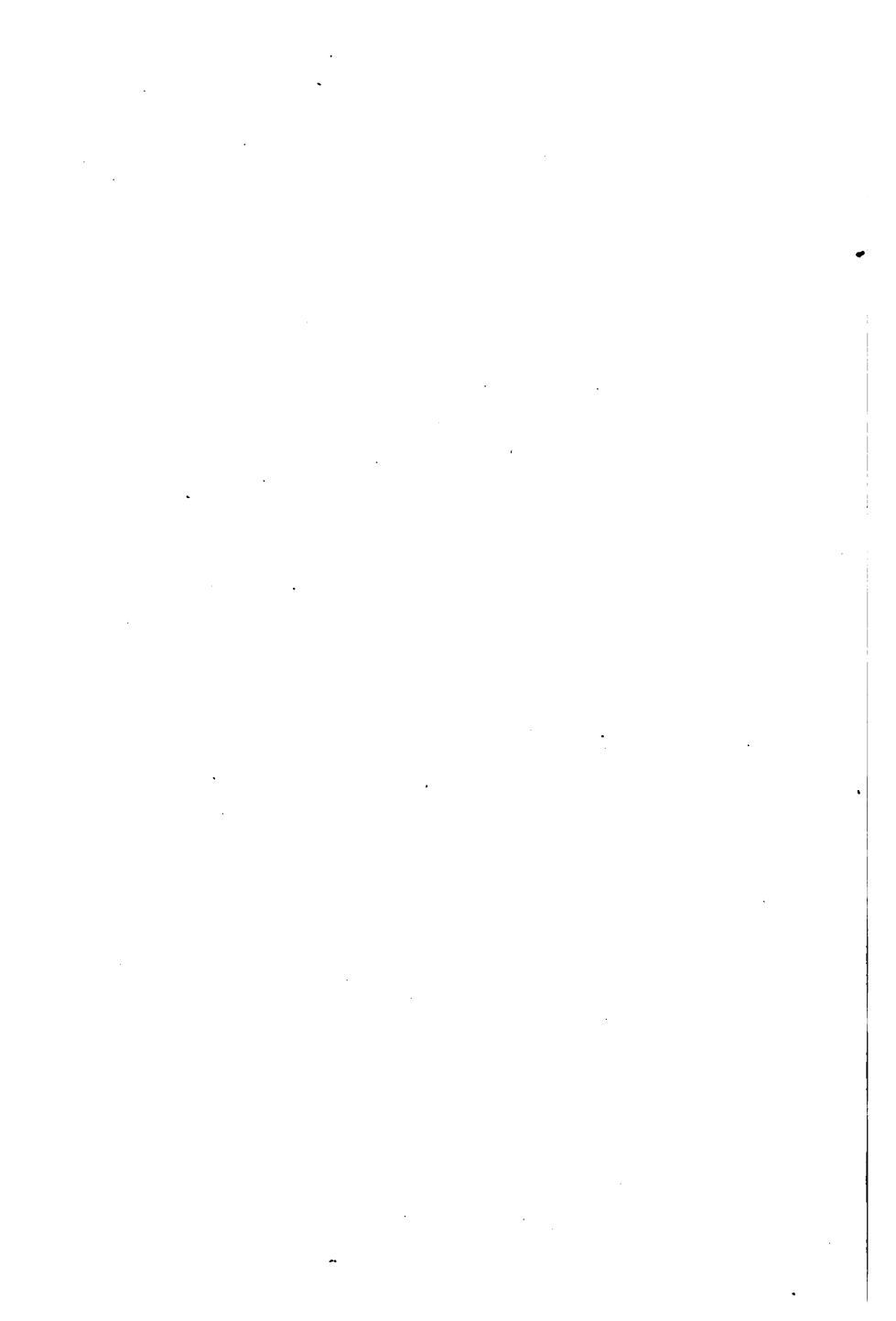
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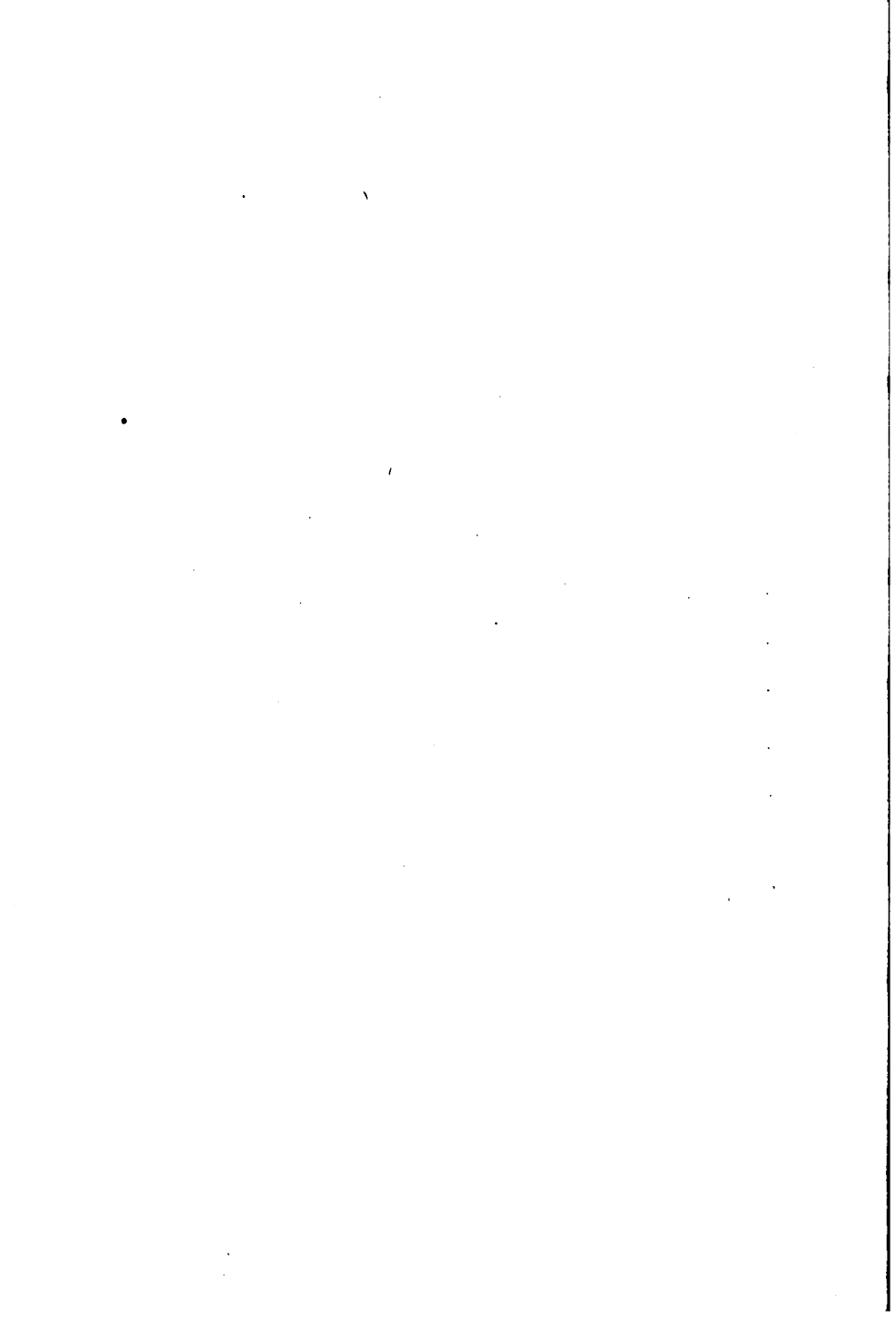


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**LOVE AND
THE SOUL MAKER**



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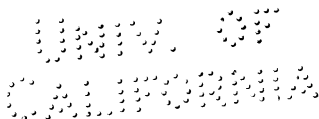
MARY AUSTIN

AUTHOR OF "THE LAND OF LITTLE RAIN,"
"A WOMAN OF GENIUS," ETC.



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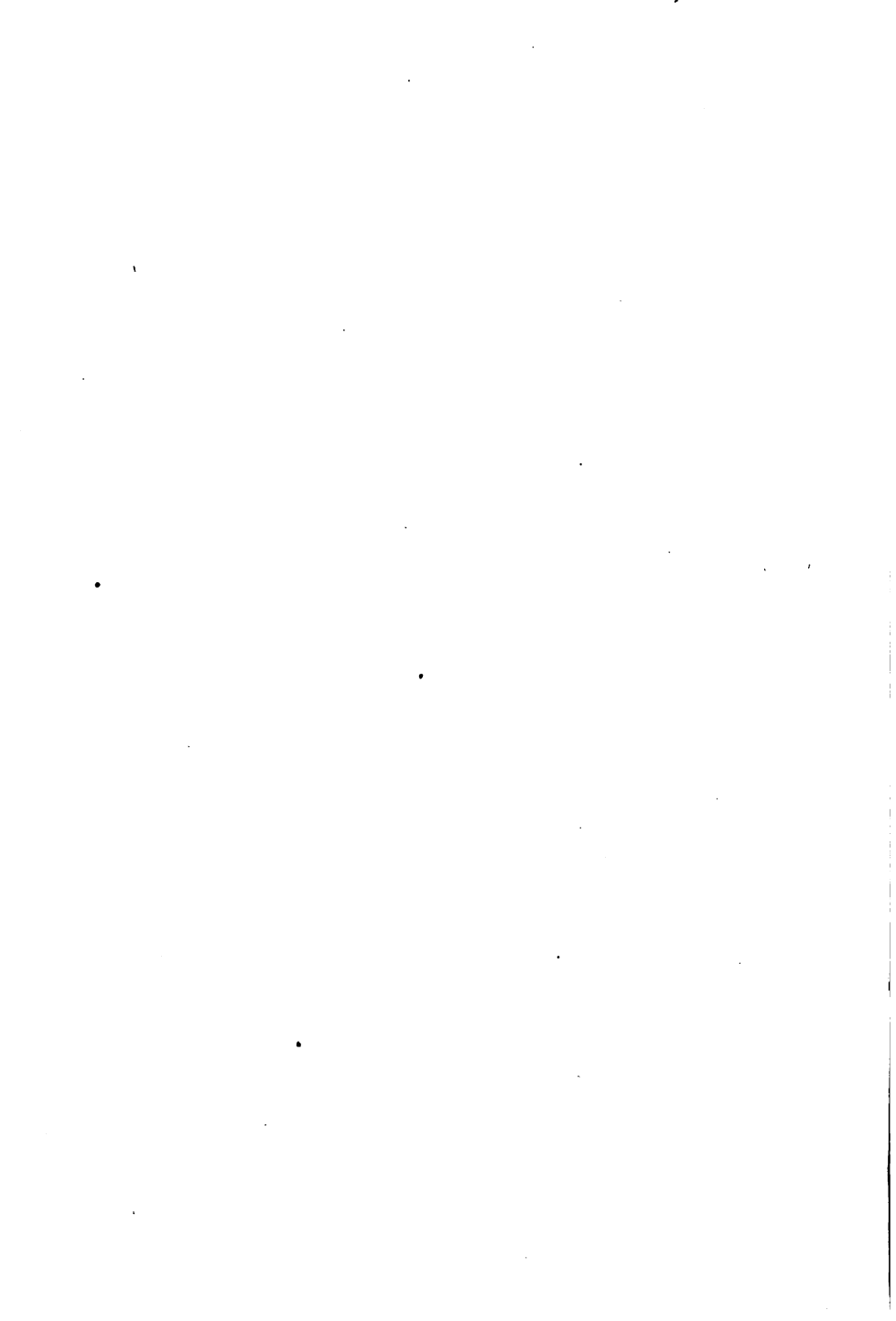
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TO THE
AUTHOR

I believe that the ills of this world are remediable while we are in the world by no other means than the Spirit of Truth and Brotherliness working their lawful occasions among men. I believe in Here and Now.

From Christ in Italy.



LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

IF somebody would only write a book about it!" said Valda McNath, "a believable book!"

We were sitting on the steps in front of Valda's bungalow in the clear obscure of twilight, watching the flat welter of the water far out on the Sound, and a blundering moth came and stirred the sweet white spikes of the phlox. Valda had been crying.

"The trouble with books about it," she said, "is that they are too scientific, or tales made out to fit a special case. It wants just a human book; true and human." Valda sighed. She hadn't found anything in the

TO VALDA LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

books to fit the special case she had made of her life, and the chief reason why I happened to be sitting there at that moment was to see her through the most unbearable of its bitternesses.

Valda is one of those women with an insatiable sort of appetite for goodness and no very clear notion of what it consists in; few men understand what that hunger is in women . . . like the opium-eater's for his drug. In her youth she had accepted the criterion of her church and made her marriage on a basis of non-smoking, church-going habits as a surface index of godliness, with a young man who turned out to have fallen into these commendable behaviours chiefly for the want of spring and vitality to become anything else. After a dozen years or so Valda had left him somewhere at the back of beyond, simply because she couldn't stand him, and come up to the city

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

sick with the hunger of what still shaped to her mind as righteousness. And she was so right, too; so sincere in her efforts to square her life with what might conceivably be the purpose of the Powers, that she couldn't just accept the leading of her appetites. She had to take her satisfactions cribbed and crammed into the frame of what for the time being, bore the name of goodness on its face. She read the publications of the Fabian Society and fell in love with a Social Reactionist.

He was a man with a mission to encourage the higher civic obligations, and wholly without a sense of humour. He and Valda made between them a high ground which somehow carried them sheer over the heads of Valda's husband and some ties of the Reactionist's, on which they breathed for a time, at least Valda breathed, rarefied, heavenly airs. But she had no sooner estab-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

lished herself there with all her baggage of passions and affections, and poor Valda carried an excess of that kind of baggage, when the Reactionist discovered that he had made a mistake in the quality of his attachment. What had begun as a self-justifying passion had died down to friendliness and, of course, a really profound respect. The Reactionist told me himself how profound it was. It appeared he would have done anything for Valda except refrain from telling her—a little the most dastardly admission a man can make to a woman—that he had pillaged her most sacred treasury in the interest of a cheap, transient indulgence. If he had involved Valda's capital of dollars to that extent, he wouldn't have thought of anything but holding on to the situation until she could have got out of it with credit; in the event of a total loss he would probably have made it up to her without

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

saying anything. But it never occurred to him that the same obligation held him to an investment of passions and affections. He wasn't a bad man, he was just—mannish. What I suspected was that Valda's disposition to sink the personal issue in the interest of the passion that had sprung up between them, charged, electric, wonderful, had rather damped his male propensity for wanting to see himself always as the mover of the game.

He would have had their love spun out from his dextrous handling, a glimmering, gossamer entanglement; but it was a child to Valda that in the intervals when they were apart, nursed at her imagination, grew beyond recognition. And the Reactionist had retired before it into a wobbly little pinnacle of a situation that, since he no longer loved Valda, he couldn't do her the disrespect to pretend that he had any obliga-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

tion beyond his own susceptibilities; and I had plucked Valda away in time, I hoped, to keep her from seeing the pit of cold egotism into which he immediately toppled.

That was how I came to be sitting there with Valda on an evening shot through with glimmers of the day's warm lights and odours, talking about sex behaviours.

"If there could only be a true book about it!" she insisted. "You could write it. But I suppose you'd be afraid of being misunderstood."

All at once I discovered, with the sense of finding myself in possession of a new aptitude—like that one in dreams in which you just tuck up your feet and go sailing through the air—that I wasn't afraid even of being misunderstood. I don't know if it is one of the things that belongs with having turned forty, but I knew at the moment,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

quite completely, that I had left it behind me.

"I shouldn't," I said. "I should hate it, of course, just as I hate being poor, but I shouldn't be afraid of it. The real fear would be that it wouldn't be what you said at first, believable."

"You think," Valda questioned, "that people would think you hadn't had experience enough; or that they would think you had too much?"

But it wasn't that either. Besides, you can't tell how much experience a woman has had, . . . you can only tell how little. . . .

"I should be afraid," I said, coming back to Valda, "that they would think it merely literary." I saw myself under the unfortunate disability of writing of matters of which no books had been written, or of not being able to quote the chapter and page

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

of those that had. An absence of the familiar earmarks of citation is sometimes misleading as to the quality of the proffered information. It wouldn't require any courage on my part to write such a book, but it might require a great deal to publish it and not have all the fructifying sources trailing after it in the shape of footnotes, as the queen bee trails the entrails of her mate.

"Ah, I don't mean an important book," insisted Valda, "not one that would enable people to talk learnedly about love, but would help us not to make such a muddle of our loving. Women want such a book, and the men need it. I know," she added hastily, "we get into a way of thinking that, because men have easier access to sex experience, they necessarily know more about it. But I tell you . . . when they come to the vital things about it . . . they just . . . grope."

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

"I am afraid," said I, "they've a notion if we had any kind of sex rationalism there wouldn't be any fun in it. It's a way some people feel about Socialism; the Great Game would be up if we abated any of our privileges of getting everlastingly worsted at it."

But in the end Valda prevailed upon me. I've done my best to make it what she wanted: a true book—and human.

Whether you find it believable is another matter. What I want most for it is that you shouldn't find it any less so because it is interesting. Even because you are moved by it. One must have been moved first in order to establish the argument.

A scientist, no doubt, in an account of the first Love dances, would have left the moon out of the sky. That is just the trouble with scientists. There is always a moon, and the light of it and the wind out of the south

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

with the smell of wild honey in it is the incalculable factor of our experience.

Too many people have got into a way of thinking that to speak of sex experience is to mean something illicit. It is in fact the most precious part of our human equipment. I want to say—I don't know why I shouldn't—that I have always found it so; and I wish more than anything else to show you how it derives its importance in our lives from this quality of its preciousness, and not from the effect of disturbing any other set of behaviours we may have agreed upon as moral.

It is necessary that we clear up the accumulation of misconceptions, irrespective of the names under which they have been going about. It is not uncommon to find women cutting themselves off from the highest manifestations of sex life by destroying its root in the interest of some of

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the more spiritualised aspects, which are not recognised as sex at all.

It seemed worth while then to draw away from the ruck of disassociated behaviours, and define the features of our common life which take their rise in the sex propensity and are yet not commonly attributable to it, and to undertake to organise a classification, if no more than a Best and Not Best, and to establish a criterion of knowing when we are getting it.

It is important to remember in this connection that it isn't necessary, in order to be contributory, for a sex encounter to be dramatic. It is not so much its range as the content and continuity with other frames of behaviour that constitute its value. There is probably not much difference between the temperament of the courtesan and any woman of wide sympathies; it is largely a matter of taking one's sex contacts

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

in incident or understanding; and it is often possible to make more of a small fixed income than an irregular large one. It is even equally a sex experience not to have had any.

I

WE have to begin, then, with love
as a matter of fact and not altogether of opinion, as a force immensely and variously operative in the individual, but tracing a definite pattern on the field of human history. What love has been we can reasonably know; the guessing begins when we try to figure out where it means to land us. Where it hasn't is on the once entertained proposition that love-life exists solely for and by its reproductive values. It is in fact a modern notion, as modern as Christianity, that sex is bailed out of the limbo of indecency by being computed in terms of children. What I venture to deny—and make good my claim

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

to do so, if you will face with me and accept at its profoundest the evidence of our daily living—is that there has never been a time since man stood up and knew himself for man, that the major process of love has been reproductive. For the truth that we witness at every turn of practice, is that the test of the value of sex in life is interior. It maintains itself by means of its psychic reactions. Considered apart from its function of multiplication, sex is an ascending human phenomenon.

I said ascending: the raptures, indecencies—not mere trailed and belittling survival of brutishness, but the very increment of progression. When we speak of “animal passion” we mean nothing that any animal can be charged with, but an inordinate human propensity, since we are not identified with our beast brother, but distinguished from him, by being sexed beyond the pri-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

mary requirement. Except in domesticity, where they learn by restraint the characteristic human vices, the dwellers in the lairs, the inhabitants of the open, are immensely more continent than man. Not only do they understand nothing of indulgence, but it is certain that many birds and apparently some quadrupeds select their mates a considerable time before they beget their young, and for reasons distinguishable from immediate gratification.

If you seek for the true mark of our bruteness you must find it, not in the excesses of civilisation, but in the ineradicable reminder in primitive custom of a time when there was a mating season for man and a period in which the whole number of his progeny evinced the totality of his sex encounters. Wherever the green bough of the man strain escapes the degeneracy of isolation and subjection, man exhibits still a de-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

gree of reticence and simplicity in his mating behaviours that likens him with his virtuous and insensate brother the beast.

It is, no doubt, the vigour of the recoil from the by-product of our burgeoning love-life, which leads us to seek a figure of licentiousness in the brute, since there is no other ground for it. Over and above the evidence of a mating season among primitive people—and the limits of a permissible primitiveness from which we may draw are to be defined later—conspicuously among the tribes in a healthy state of growth, is polygamy infrequent, adultery rare, and prostitution practically unknown, except——

It is the exception that establishes the use of sex, over and above the preservation of the species, on a plane with our highest human activities. So far as surviving conditions serve to show it, the initial sex ex-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

cess was social, public, and periodic, indissolubly associated with those enterprises which human society seeks most to preserve. Not the scientists, not even Mr. Darwin, though he tried by deriving one from the other, can dissever the three-plied root of sex and art and religion.

And if you make a point of what I admit, that there are no primitives known, there is still primitiveness, and the evidence surviving in things as inconsiderable as the shape of a papal hat and the most cherished of our symbols, to point the attention back to the time when the earliest extra use of sex was worshipful.

Consider the sly, undefended beast man was, kin to the climbers as he dropped long flights from bough to bough, companion to jackals as by the water holes he stalked his daily kill or with his mate, his young brood at his back, he ranged the deep, continuous

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

wood—until the mate grew heavy and sought caves and grassy hollows to await her time; against which he ranged the farther, following the game as it shifted its feeding ground, consorting with other males as bucks run together at the beginning of September, always and indefensibly open to the influence of the wild.

And nature drew him very much as she drew the deer and the partridge by the crudescence of the year. Power that came upon the procreant earth came also upon man. When the sun was in Aries, he turned himself, as birds to old nesting places, toward the immemorial gathering place of his kind.

There, when the moon came up and walked in glory on the hills, when the new smell of the earth mixed with the odour of the budding forest, and the scrub was in flower, the man within man erected itself.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

The tribe stood up ; they stamped the moist earth ; they locked arms, around the red heap of the kill, around the rosy almond bush ; they widened the circle, narrowed it ; they beat the earth with their feet until it resounded. In the gullies bucks tossed their antlers with a rhythmic motion, pawing the wet sod ; the cranes danced by the water courses.

Two or three things happen when men move together concertedly from a single impulse, but first and most notable is the increase of personal power. If they no more than sit at a meal together they will eat more, assimilate more readily, by the mere contagion of vitality. Judge how, when they dance together on windy hill fronts at the tonic urge of spring, the mind of man is raised to the perception of divinity—creative power seeking its release in the immediate, symbolic, fructifying act.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

No doubt there is more to be known of this than is good for us; we stop short of making a veil of things called unseemly between the unaccustomed vision and the true interpretation of the act by which the savage at the culmination of his dancing, between the dawn wind and the dew-wet sod, identified himself with the male principle of earth. The most that I would accomplish is to have you leave the reproductive service of sex where it belongs, with the physiologist, and to think of its super-function as beginning not basely and in corners, but by social consent; and all the cry of it, the pain, the poetry, the dear, nesting delight, the many-coloured play of it across the surface of our civilisation, one with the purr of the warm earth turning her long flanks to the procreant sun, and the impulse that makes men to sing and to prophesy.

II

IT should be easy even for the materialist to understand how the revelation of divinity should have come to the first men—as the meticulousness of our religious history neglects to tell us—through the knowledge of creativeness in themselves.

And what a tremendous piece of knowledge it was when man discovered that by an act being could come into the world where no being was before. Man and God, they met together as makers of life. But it must have taken as many instances, as much wagging of heads as a modern theory of vaccination, to establish the contingency of offspring on the procreative act, and much longer before the assumption of other means

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

and influences to accomplish the same end gave way to the exact knowledge of the gynecologist. All our old wives' lore is full of intimations of the time when the sequence was by no means accepted as a certainty, and it is still possible to find tribes with well established marriage codes who, if they desire children, feel it necessary to help the situation along by rites and observances.

One hesitates to rake up these old family scandals in an age when it has reached its all but perfect apogee, but the fact is that male parental responsibility is an acquired characteristic, a thing which, if one insists—which I do not—upon the disinheritability of acquirement, men must have inherited from their mothers, who can be shown to have had always an appreciable degree of it. It requires a steady countenance to face in the practice still extant among the least developed of the tribes of eating the earliest

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

offspring, the root of the religious immolation of the first-born. But it is worth the loss of some sentiment to realise that no tribesman would be in a position to dispose of his own child as a strange, uncanny thing which had come from nobody knew where, in a manner wholly inexplicable, unless he had been spending at least the better part of a year in the society of its mother. But in fact we need not go so far back as that; no further than the ancient Britons who impregnated their female slaves to increase their value before selling them, or to the newest Duke who denies his son by the chambermaid, to realise that it has not been the child which has primarily brought men and women together and held them. It holds them sometimes when the primary reason has burned down and fallen in the ash; it has become by the processes of time, part of the mating consciousness of today;

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

but there is no way to escape the historical priority of mate-love over parental obligation. I am not sure one may not safely reckon the latter as a by-product of marriage. It is significant in this connection to remember that among birds, where male obligation manifests itself in the desire to incubate, we have also successive matings, rapidly recurrent rhythms of mate-love, approaching the human status.

§

"Ah," cried Valda in a disappointed tone, "if you are going to make the chiefest part of love the act by which it is expressed, you'll never get me to believe it."

"Wait," I said. "I told you there was unmistakable evidence of a mating period for man, and a time when he was as continent as a beast. That first man who made a sacrifice of his first child to the mysteri-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

ous, rending powers of life—what do you suppose he was about all that nine months before that, he and the child's mother? What do all the wild pairs in the wood, the prairie, the secret lairs, who, having mated once, do not again until by the recurrent season nature says they may? Mate-love," said I, "even at the earliest maintains itself by its psychic reactions."

They are the most obvious things about it. One finds the Great Experimenter playing with them all across the field of animal intelligence . . . bird songs . . . love dances . . . of that more hereafter. Why should the buck lead out the doe with threatening frontlet a summer long in the interest of an experience which will not be repeated, or a progeny of which there is no conscious expectation, long before the appearance of which he will be shunted back to the society of other males? Why, indeed, except at the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

urgency of a reaction which outlasts the compulsion of the body by as much as in man it outranks it?

I know of no way to deal with mate-love except as a fact, a force by itself, which, perhaps, demands mind for its displaying ground; which seizes on mind as the electric fluid seizes on its machine. It produces in us such results as our mechanism admits of, and nature is served by them as much as by the nine-months-belated offspring. As such a force it may be studied, its directions noted, its reactions collated, its values measured. I doubt, indeed, if it be truth to say we love at all. Loving goes on in us.

Beyond this point, to the source and end of loving, the guessing begins. It is inextricably bound up with and affected by the procreant act. What nobody attempts to deny, however, is that the initial impulse

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

was from the outside. Desire came upon the earth with its turning to the sun. An irreproachable materialistic definition of love is that it is the psychic accompaniment of an act, dictated by surcharged organs, whose rhythm is fixed by the alternation of seasons, occasioned by the revolution of planets about the sun which is itself determined by a movement toward the constellation Hercules. Such an explanation reminds one of the old story about the earth which rested on the back of a turtle which rested on a rock which was supported by another rock—rock all the way down. The most the materialist can do for you is to get you to the farthest fixed star, which is really much nearer than we are to the reason why we love. Perhaps the Force, on its way to what unknowable end, seizes merely on the mechanisms of sex, too, to turn them to its use. At any rate there is no set of organs

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

in the human frame more susceptible to the influences of what we agree to call mind.

It needs be said, however, and emphasised, that the psychic reactions of mate-love are by no means substitutes for physical passion, but the very root and stock of it. There is a great deal passing about faith and chivalry and service as though they were a supernormal sort of wares and the poets had invented them. One needs only to have seen the wild stallion trumpet up his mares out of the wet gullies, or the she-wolf leave the prey, trotting nose to flank of her captious lord, to realise that they are exactly as supernormal as the branch is to the trunk.

The effort of early Christianity to eradicate passion by denying its pertinence to life, has got us into much difficulty on this point; but not so much as comes of the disassociation of root and branch through

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the natural circumstance of the remoteness of the physical reaction in women and its immediacy in man.

The tradition of love as a more spiritualised product of femininity arises largely in the fact of the woman first becoming aware of it through the psychic reactions it sets up, unconnected with any physical intimation which she has been taught to recognise. I know of no misunderstanding so mischievous as this disassociation of source and reaction which induces women to deny the existence of passion when they have only deferred its crisis. It leads to the neglect of a most important element in the choosing of a mate, and an affected disinclination to the act by which the divine inundation may come.

But the loss is always to the woman. It is not uncommon to hear wives complain of a want of spiritual *rapprochement* with their hus-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

bands when all that is required is to have the mechanism of sex set in order., For what is this spiritual *rapport* but the sum of all the reactions set in motion by passion toward tenderness, toward the assumption of excellence, toward the identification of personal experience with world processes? Not only these exist, not superiorly to passion, but by means of it, but I doubt that there can be any informing intimacy between men and women unless there exists also the potentiality of passionate experience. Community of interest there may be, but no vitalising exchange without the attractions of sex to fructify the sowing of soul upon soul.

§

All our human functions are immensely complicated by imagination and that form of extraneous memory called literature. We are greatly in need just now of a distinction

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

between those social procedures which have arisen from time to time in the interest of mate-love as our estimate of its relativity to life has varied, and the natural, un-invented operations of love itself. Love fashions, unhappily, do not become obsolete as readily as hats, to the great confusion of our behaviour.

There is such a deal of thinking about love and deciding beforehand how it should conduct itself—milling it over with the help of current fiction and the preferred ethical convention. What is imperative is to find out in what fashions love manifests itself. It probably isn't a mystery. The human animal is the only one who affects profoundly not to understand the female of his species. Having begun with the unargued assumption that she is an inferior being, he probably doesn't; but in fact most of such mystification which is not produced for the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

trade is generally due to differences in the choice of manners by which to be loved.

If you court in the style of the stone age and the lady has a fancy for fourteenth century Italian, you will come to grief between you unless you can learn that all love manners are but preferred modes for the expression of a reality. But if you can accept as a distinguishing mark of right passion, the disposition to achieve, then you will get on nicely even though she could wish to see you leading a forlorn hope up a bayonet-bristling hill, while the circumstances of your life prompt you to put up a little corner in the Street.

This demand on the part of the young for a highly dramatised love-making manner, is legitimate and should receive some attention. It raises the key of right passion, and that in its turn has undoubtedly its effect on the personal vitality of the offspring. What

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the young try to bring forth in their courtships is the deep-seated, racial evidence of rightness. It is shaped to absurdity by the unlovely processes of every day. Only when in great crises all our manners are stilled, these age-long racial certainties come to the surface of life in heroic proportions. The mistake we make is to impute them to our superior civilisation. "Women and children first" is by no means the exquisite flower of modern chivalry, but the working of that natural law by which the dog will not chase the vixen nor the wolf reprove his mate at certain seasons of the year. It proves in the tribes that observe it, not how far they have come along the highroad, but how freshly flows in them still the vital human sap. Nations in which, in the face of violent catastrophes, the males save themselves first are the nations that drop behind in the scale of civilisation.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

The truth is that there is no more modern love than there is modern digestion. There are only modern disorders of it.

§

"Well, then," said Valda, when I had got as far as this, "in what fashion is it?"

We were sitting still together; the sky was all the colour of obsidian and the friendly dark stood off by the bay-berry bushes waiting for the withdrawing of the lamp. A little wisp of warmth, lost from the day, came and snuggled down beside us; it had scents about it of the dusty country roadside.

"Love is not the same for men and women," insisted Valda. She was thinking of the Reactionist.

"It depends," said I, "on how far you have relatively come with it toward the racial goal. He had never caught up with

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

you." I thought it kinder not to say that I thought he never would have been able to, he hadn't Valda's stride. Valda wanted to be loved by the Superman, and his style was early Victorian.

III

THE opening movement of love is a sense of extraordinary well-being. It is a matter, if you like, of secretions, of increased temperatures, of accelerated vibrations. Love is a quickening. It knows itself from other intoxications only by the conviction that its well-spring is the person of the beloved.

The lover exposes himself to that contagion with alacrity. His exaltation maintains itself in absence by the mere certainty of the beloved being in the world. When passion is reciprocated it is capable, at this stage, of producing, in some natures, definite, extra-normal results, a kind of clairvoyance even, by which the lovers, moving

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

each about their separate affairs, keep touch with one another. Life marshalled by the humming blood falls into order and meaning. The whole personality sings to a higher key.

Twin flower of this same stalk is the attribution of every excellence to the beloved; the illusion of the best. It is one of those things, if you want to know, by which, to me, personality is evinced in the Great Experimenter. Nature, workaday drudge, has arranged, in the interest of the improvement of the species, that the mating propensity should be always toward the best—witness the quick surrenders of primitive women toward men of the conquering race—but in the ordinary course of things the best cannot be for everybody. Shall the rest go on aching? Not so the Experimenter; he sets up this device of the auto-suggestion of passion by which whatever is lacking is a gift

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

to the beloved object from the lover. Should not this fever in me have some high and commensurable source? So the Soul Maker assists nature in the disposition even of her damaged articles.

Life proceeds greatly by these values which we bestow on one another. "You can make anything you like of me," protests the lover to his lady; which is probably an exaggeration. This stage of passion is hypnotical, amenable to suggestion in line with its characteristic tendency, which is toward the dramatisation of the personality in terms of behaviour. What the lover will do under the stimulus of passion is very largely determined by the preferred behaviours of his time. There was a Saxon once who assaulted a monastery and slew eighty monks single-handed as a way of exemplifying the superiority of his mistress over all other ladies. Really she might have been quite

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

uninteresting; all that the incident proved was what the lover was capable of, energised to his highest plane by forces which she had inducted to him.

It is by this capacity for releasing unsuspected forms of energy that passion justifies itself, even though no children come of it. It is a natural, automatic method of raising men to their highest plane of activity; and it is worthy of note that deliberate celibates have commonly to resort to deliberate means of prayer, asceticism, or artificially stimulated enthusiasms to keep themselves at the norm of human efficiency. For chief among the uses of passion is the raising of the percentage of values in those who entertain it.

We have a way of urging people deprived of their lawful occasions to "make themselves happy"; that is to say, set up in themselves by taking pains that sense of

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

well-being, of accelerated energies, which flows naturally and inevitably from a healthy, reciprocated, human passion.

All this, in a degree and for a time, passion accomplishes for all of us by means of its psychic reactions. We have hardly any means of knowing how long it could maintain itself in a state of suspension. The poets have furnished us with some notable instances, but it is to be remembered that Dante was living more or less comfortably with his wife much of the time he was visiting Beatrice in Paradise; and though Petrarch's sonnets were inspired by the lady of his affections, he had, I believe, a child by his housekeeper. Unquestionably the tendency of passion divorced too long from its native expression is toward morbidity. Moreover there are distinct psychic values of mate-love which do not come into existence without the reality of marriage, and

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

are appreciably lessened by long suspensions. In particular, I refer to the reaction of voluntary seclusion.

It is the instinct of right mates, as soon as mating is accomplished, or in the settled intimacy of betrothal, to withdraw from the attention, even the most innocent, of other lovers—a disposition so rooted in our love-life that not the most sophisticated society succeeds in quite breaking it down. It is older than our life, more imperative. In the social animals it serves to lead them apart from the herd for months after mating is accomplished, though there is nothing except the pleasure of companionship to come of that adventure. Here again one catches the Experimenter at work, for that this withdrawal is not in the immediate interest of the young is evident from the fact that in the higher species, and very probably in primitive man, the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

males are temporarily returned to the social group during the crisis of maternity.

The suggestion put forward sometimes by those who wish by it to purchase an unreproved licence for themselves, that the virtue of women is an acquired characteristic created by the artificial restraints of man, has no support from the little we know of initial human history. It has no support, either, in what we know today of the assault, deception, drugging, and abducting, necessary to supply the demand of men whom no compulsion drives to what they do. The impulse of fidelity in the female is as old as mind, whether she be one only or one of many, she turns after mating to follow the mate. Threatened in her inviolateness she invites, she demands, his sanction for it and his insistence. She is the prize, not of any wantonness of her own,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

but of a second male's ability to maintain more successfully that instinctive seclusion, more potent with females than appetite. Plain ignorance of the facts of animal life is responsible for much confusion on this point. The male does not protect his mate from being fought by other males or being abused by them, but from being loved by them.

In its initiative this secluding instinct was no doubt to protect the impregnated female from the persecution of similar attempts, but one sees the Soul Maker seizing on the exalted states of the mating period to fix in the species habits of the highest value to its ultimate development. Here, long in advance of any need of it, is developed the quality of protectiveness in the male. Here the buck brandishes his antlers and rehearses on behalf of his brother man the dominant male attitude which has had so

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

much to do with the form of our social organisation.

Undoubtedly many of our reluctantly resigned marriage customs have arisen in the effort to externalise reactions of the mating period, felt to be so right as to merit permanence. It is not unlikely that the idea of property in women acquired a certain sanction from the subconscious perception of naturalness in the abnegation by the mate of all other male interests, a naturalness which has made it easy for society to fasten on women the artificial compulsions that attempt to recognise the rightness of seclusion by making it an institution. Women suffered it, sensing no tyranny in a restriction so agreeable to their natural instincts. But women have paid for it in the weakening of character by forcible restraint. Loyalty of the mate is a psychic reaction and in normal conditions is com-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

petent to maintain itself in the presence of great personal freedoms.

§

Here then is the spoor of right passion all across our history; but nature will have a surer mark. For mate-love is distinguishable from all the cross-bred, ring-streaked and striped hybrids got by convention on society, all the pale stalks come up in unsunned cellars of fortuitous celibacy, by three high signs. It manifests itself as a desire for permanent, public, and exclusive relation.

I say desire for. I no more profess that mate-love fulfils itself in modern society than that the undeveloped, overfed, slack-shouldered, bow-legged bodies that go up and down our streets represent the physical fulfilment of men. Let us go slowly here and perhaps we shall go together.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

You will hardly deny me the element of publicity. It is the unfailing characteristic. Right love rejoices not only in calling society to witness, but in inviting the attention of whatever gods may be. The wedding feast is the earliest known personal social occasion, and there is not wanting evidence that it is one of the earliest religious ceremonies. I can learn of no tribe that has not some method of public and solemn attestation either immediate, or in the nature of an annual ceremony participated in by all the pairs that have mated that year.

For right love is its own justification; it breaks down the barriers of discretion; it demands publicity even at the price of scorn. And the faith on which it dares so much is faith in its own permanence.

It is the distinguishing mark of mate-love to deem itself undying. That it is not al-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

ways so is beside the mark. Constancy in love is very much a matter of character in him who entertains it; good steel subjected to the electric current remains a permanent magnet; soft iron returns to the condition of soft iron. We cannot require more of man or metal than that they bear witness to the true magnetic fluid. Mate-love is also liable to the disintegrating influence of all the other exigencies which we have tied up with it, though with no more generic claim than the can to the dog's tail. Passion engendered in an unstable temperament or in the soil of immaturity, subjected to our modern strain, may easily fail of the condition of permanence, but no laughter should attend upon its profession. It is the stroke which ushers marriage on the scene. And marriage is the Soul Maker's mark, for marriage means stable conditions, and that means the improvement of the race,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

which so far as we can surmise is what the Soul Maker is after.

§

"It's true enough," Valda admitted, "but there are other things to be taken into consideration."

"What things?" I knew perfectly, but I wished Valda to state them for herself.

"Well—there's unloving——"

"I'm coming to that. And what others?"

"What they are always telling us, you know, about there having been all forms of marriage in the world, and about the primitive horde." By "they" she meant the group of social malcontents who insist on being called advanced on the ground that they find themselves different. Not that I mean malcontent for a term of opprobrium, I'm one myself in particular directions, but Valda's friends managed to give to it the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

standing of a profession. Besides there is a difference between going forward and going about like a water bug in the circle of your own limitations.

"They tell us," she insisted, "that man is naturally and actually polygamous."

"Yes—if by 'naturally' you mean that under certain conditions he takes to it as easily as, in the absence of proper flesh food, he takes to cannibalism; but no, if you mean that promiscuity is to be taken as a species mark as you take his disposition to be combative and predatory. But in any case you wouldn't have us hark back to *those* naturalistic tendencies."

Valda was shocked. As a rule there is nothing your avowed free-lover insists on so much as that all the passions of greed, ambition, love of power, mere unrestrained love of doing even, when it leads man to advance himself in the possession of goods,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

should be checked and bridled. But the argument that all men should be openly promiscuous because many of them are secretly so, is valid only when you go far enough to say that all men should rob because a few privately peculate, and freely kill because they freely hate. It is not the thing that man is found doing at any particular time that establishes the law, but his general direction. All that we turn back the pages of life for, is to find out what life is about. The point at which love begins concerns us only as a means of finding out where it is going.

For love is by no means an end in itself; it must get forward, it travels toward a mark.

The truth about the "primitive horde" theory is that it is merely a theory, advanced as a possible explanation of certain elements of primitive society which have not yet

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

yielded up their process of evolution. So far as we have any dependable account of early man, we find him with two marked social determinations: marriage of some sort, that is, a set of rules and rituals governing his mating habits; and a custom of marrying outside of certain bonds, fixed in a general way by what he understands as consanguinity. The hypothesis which in some quarters is thought best to account for these is that of an original group of females and their young, centred about some notable male; which group might be augmented from time to time by annexing women of his slaughtered enemies, or decimated by desertions of the young for more suitable mates. From such a group young males, as soon as their approaching maturity menaced the supremacy of the patriarch, would be driven to run with the "gang" of other adolescent bachelors;

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

a race habit which still asserts itself wherever the social organisation gives it room.

Such youths then, in the recurrent urge of the mating season, stole or enticed brides where they found them and began the formation of new groups around a single pair. It is possible also that young women, bound to the group by ties of association, timid of the wild, might have consented to be loved without detaching themselves from the parent stem, might even have demanded some capitulation on the part of the lover as a condition of being loved at all. And in time, as his eyes dimmed and his strength went from him, the patriarch himself might have been glad to make livable terms with his sons or the husbands of his daughters, to save himself from what must too often have been his bitter finish, driven by young bucks of his species aside and apart

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

to range the wood like some deposed, disantlered leader of the herd.

That some such natural, social formation as this preceded the stage known to us as tribal, is generally conceded. But since the patriarchate still leaves something unexplained of the nearly universal practice of exogamy—that is, the rule which determined what groups might or might not be mated with—it is assumed that a state of complete promiscuity must have preceded even the primary group. One must bear in mind, however, that it is purely an assumption, based on the belief that the primitive horror of any violation of sexual exclusiveness is derived from experience rather than instinct. Two or three things render this unlikely. The first is that if exogamy is the fruit of experience, there is no reason why opportunity for experiential certainty might not have arisen within the family

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

group, out of such sporadic relations as might be allowed to the liability of human nature. In the second place, the tribal ban as we know it in too many instances, has nothing to do with anything which could properly be called consanguinity, and the factor of experience, if it were allowed at all, would quickly contradict the supposed basis. Moreover, recent investigation into the facts of cross-breeding has by no means tended to confirm the notion that the motive behind exogamy could be even very largely experiential. But the most persistent advocate of the theory that a condition of not marrying certain people must have arisen out of a previous condition of marrying just anybody, must still take account of certain facts.

First at hand is the persistent effort of nature to maintain the balance of population, for every man a woman, so that for the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

patriarch to have segregated two or more of them implied, in the long run, an artificial decimation of males by war or the accidents of the chase. Nature, when she makes a species, fixes its mating habit; it comes ready made with the species mark, and the range of variation within the species is not wide enough to enable man by artificial restraints very greatly to override it. Breeders in all the centuries have not been able to mate doves except in pairs, and elephants resist the effort to force their inclination with what, among humans, amounts to heroism. One anticipates that the mating habit of man, augmented by imagination and the æsthetic consciousness, will show a greater range of adaptability; but if, as the balance of sexes seems to indicate, the original impulse is by pairs, there must easily be a point beyond which the variation cannot be pushed without proving hurtful to the spe-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

cies. It is not a question whether some form of promiscuity may not be present in society as persistently as the trace of iron in spring water; the real test is, when such a form of it is entertained in a determining degree, what does it do to the host? Fortunately the facts by which such damage may be demonstrated lie too close to the surface to make it necessary to recount them.

What polygamy, which all nations seem to have picked up in the course of their wars, does to the nations that have not yet discarded it, may be learned at the high school. What the polygamous habit, persisting long after the theory of it is discredited by society, has to do with existing evils, has yet to be discussed. I but pause here to turn back its earliest pages to protest against the effort to stifle the secret word love whispers to the soul, by deductions from the mating habits of far-called tribes, torn shreds

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

of nations, feeble and few, degenerate or arrested in development by the very habits adduced. As well undertake to prescribe the training of the healthy human child by the behaviour of an adult idiot.

If the behaviour of existing tribes is to be ensampled at all, let it at least be where there is a normal process of growth, as in the case of American Indians who were on the point of inventing an alphabet when Europe interrupted them, among whom traces of the annual mating season are still found, and the simple, excluding, lifelong mating habit preponderates, or among those magnificent South Sea islanders who are reputed first to have learned of adultery from the Christian missionaries.

What does stand out across the tribes is the stripe of marriage, the attempt to externalise in rituals, in prohibitions and penalties, the universal human conviction that

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

there enters into sex relations a moral element, things that may or may not be done for the good of the community. The measure of immunity of unfaithfulness has never been calculated on the kind of marriage but on the fact of it. In group marriages infidelities outside the group are as reprehensible as individual delinquencies with us, and judgment to a fifteenth wife is not meted out to her as being one-fifteenth as blamable, but on the relation of her conduct to a racial instinct.

§

More striking and dramatic even than the evidences of struggle toward its ultimate mark, are the public and immediate reactions which mate-love sets up against any infringement of its inviolateness. I refer to sex jealousy and that movement which drives apart the participators in a relation

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

which has no sanction other than mere bodily appetite; the impulse which turns a man's hand upon the poor puppet of his desires, that makes, long before church and state were there to take a hand in it, an avoidance and a derision of the prostitute.

Jealousy is the psychic reaction by which the naturalness of the exclusive relation makes itself evident in any breach. It is the subconscious conviction of the extra-participation of both members of a pair in the union which the mating act implies; the unpremeditated, unexperienced, immediate witness to the bond which by that act comes into being. It is as imperative as the impulse of the man attacked to strike back, and probably as self-protective. It arises naturally in our brother the beast; mixed with the grief of loss and the bitterness of betrayal, it becomes the most rending of our human tragedies, and informs even the be-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

haviour of those who seek to deny it by substituting withdrawal for the ancient, instinctive movement of reprisal. Under all our social reprobation it is still a motive force shaping our marriage institutions.

A growing modern dislike for the forms under which jealousy has expressed itself is partly responsible for our neglect of it as a true symptom of mate-love. We shrink from the torment of this most instinctive of natural protests. Few dare trust themselves to the rack of such a reality to learn, as through its revelations one must, love's final word. They fear the pain, they fear its hurrying them through any personal weakness into acts retributive rather than corrective; most of all they fear the modern anathema of "hysterical" by which too many of our native impulses are damned by those in whom they have withered away. Much of the attempted repression of this active

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

reagent is of the stripe of that triumph of fashion over instinct which enables the stomach to put up with caviar and rotting cheese. Man, who has lost his native ability to distinguish between poisonous and non-poisonous foods, stands to lose, as our estimate of their relative values varies with the changing ethical mode, his power of discriminating the racial aptitudes by which we lay hold of life. The importance of sex jealousy is not the part it plays in the comfort or discomfort of those experiencing it, but in the light it throws on the purpose of the Soul Maker.

It is worth while remembering in this connection that jealousy where it arises among our brother beasts, is not in any way connected with maintenance. Neither is it a protest against an act, an act probably not remembered and still less anticipated, but against violations of the relation which by

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

that act comes into being. Wild mate remands wild mate to its obligation long after the seasonal impulse has spent itself. "Conjugal rights," at which term the modern protestant is known to froth at the mouth, is still somewhat older than humanity.

It is probable that much of the present day complaisance over violations of marital obligations, arises out of the realisation that infidelity is so frequently not infidelity to a true marriage bond, but to an arrangement in which the item of "support" has shifted the ground from passion to property. Not to have experienced jealousy is not necessarily to have risen superior to it. It is sometimes due to having never truly mated.

Of that other internal test of the right relation, I mean the reaction of disgust, of cruelty even, no proper study can be made from the outside as I must make it. Traces

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

of the disposition of man to hold cheap the woman who has met him outside the tribal ban, lie deep in all our literature; it is testified to by many who have no notion what it proves against them. It is the root of much of the ignominy heaped upon the prostitute, against whom, even among tribes that show definite symptoms of degeneracy, it is possible still to find the ribald jest and the deriding finger. One needs only to read the confessions of men great enough to confess freely, to know that there are relations going on among us of which the immediate reaction is revolt. What we have here is probably the advice of life subconsciously aware of what is not good for it; such a health-preserving movement as leads to the rejection of food with which eye and intelligence find no fault. The pity of it is that the point should be so persistently missed, that the social mark should be set not so

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

much against the act as against the victim of it.



It has been pointed out that the habit of remaining together had made its appearance among the mating pairs some time before the reproductive sequence had established itself as a part of common knowledge. But even in the face of that certainty, there arose very early the need of justifying human passion superiorly to itself. It can be found among peoples where you cannot find to lay with it a scrap of metal or a potsherd—everywhere, Greek, Bantu, Bushman, turning to religion for the sanction of their love, for the occasion and extenuation of their excesses, drawing a veil of mystic rites over their unspeakable performance. And everywhere across the tribes sounds the high note of deliberate continence in the interests

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

of the spiritual endowment; the effort to attain the super-union by denying the act which is its overt sign. Before men fully clothed themselves they had arrived at the use of sexual abstinence as a means of raising the plane of personal power.

§

"You mean," said Valda, "that everywhere men suspected a moral basis for their love-life, and were fumbling to find it?"

"Wait," I said, "the wind is talking." We could hear it moving down the country road where the elms bent and bowed to it, rehearsing the ancient ritual of their kind. By the bridge it broke blunderingly up the draw where we heard it whimpering among the dogwood and the alders. It must have been a ruse merely to distract our attention, for the next moment it rushed us from across the grass lots where the new-cut tim-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

othy lay in windrows, whirling up glittering dried stalks of it high under the moon, as it went on to wake the pines. They stood out darkly on the crown of the hill above the field, forever and darkly busy to retake the reaches of the ancient wood. Valda's mind still ran on the phase of the subject that had last hung in the air between us.

"Be still," I warned her, "there's something coming to me from over there among the pines." We could see them fingering down the wind for the communicating touch.

It came to me out of the past—from dusky figures stealing out of the wet fields when the moon was up and the rice in flower—from the Green Corn dance—from all rites and ceremonies whereby man identified the processes of nature with those going on in himself. It came from blasted Thebes—from Job clearing himself pas-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

sionately from the fire that consumeth to destruction and the horror that reaches down, so deep down that no keen and powerful intellect has yet followed it to the root of the world. Somewhere there in the dark I felt the cold muzzle of the beast brother at my hand, and the thread of the one thing the race has known as it knew the way to its mother's breast, one thing it has never let go of—that there is a right use of mate-love and a wrong use of it, a pure and impure, an energising, Godward use, a disintegrating, cankering use; and all forms and ceremonies are but the attempt to determine and define, to put, as it were, the bar between the personal adventure and the racial experience of disaster—an attempt to render in terms of human institutions the thing love knows when first it gains a footing in consciousness, itself an excluding, enduring, ascending force.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

"I know——" said Valda. "I've always known—we've always known," she corrected herself. "That's why we women trust so much. It is so right, so natural for love to go on, to reach the external mark. How do you suppose we knew?"

"Nature wouldn't have left us so undefended," I was sure. "It was necessary for women to know what lay so close to the processes of life. All the time we've known a lot of things that we are only just finding out." She took fire from me; all the stuff of experience flared up.

"Speak, Oh, speak for us!" she whispered.

So I began to speak to her about the Word That Came to Women.

§

When woman lay in the womb of the world,
Ere the heart of the world was divided,
Before there was faith or forsaking,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

They heard what the high gods said—
Making, unmaking—

Heard it small and apart as a spider
Dropped from her gossamer thread
Heareth far overhead
The talk of the forest—

Darkly as pines that confer
With their high tops bound together
In the Wills that blow between the worlds,
Fingering the Wills for the thread
That binds the upper world and the nether—
The will of each to each in its kind,
And the will of all to Oneness.

“Lo,” said the makers of men,
Ere man was moulded,
Sitting under the Wills as in dreams men should see
them

Shaping our eldern earth under an Ash-tree,
“Sow we the Word unto Life as the linden
Scatters her summer winged seeds to the windy spaces,
Even so as it falls, we shall take council together
For the sake of man that we make, lest the Wills rend
him—

Eyeless, untiring, rotting, reforming—

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

Binding him fast unto Life, we shall fend him
With the will of each unto each in his kind
And the will of all to Oneness."

Then the Word went glinting forth,
As between the sun and the dawning
The silken fleets of the milkweed
Sail in the windless air above the marshes,
In the days when the Man within man
Stood up from the Beast his brother,
And suddenly Life was stirred,
As the prows in the harbour
Move all at once and together,
When the land wind begins,
And deeper than surf or tide
The sea dreams of adventure.

Up leaped the doe from the fern
When the buck belled her,
Leaving the uncropped scrub and the bindweed blossom,
Following nose on flank, dappled and antlered;
Afar at her killing the voice of the lonely land
Answered the roar of her lord in the hot blue dawning;
Mellowly out of his thicket whistled the hermit thrush,
And "True—true—true"—moaned the doves by the
water courses.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

Small and afar as a spider climbs to the sun
The woman climbed up to life by the thread from her
 body spun,
And she marked through the leaf and bloom of life
How the changing patterns run
In the Wills that blow across the world
As the wind across the wheat,
And the opal bubbles of love frothed up
And broke in slime at her feet.
But she braved the rending forces,
And she dared the Wills to meet,
For the word was in her bosom
Ere ever life begun,
The will of each to each in its kind
And the will of us all to One.

IV

BUT in spite of it all," Valda insisted, "all the evidence which nature seems to produce in favour of guaranteed relations as the best means of accomplishing her purpose, there are still—other things."

"Polygamy and the social evil," I conceded.

"All kinds of irregular relations; there must be reasons for them, too."

Perfectly sound ones; most of them derived from the unavoidable tendency of social ventures not in harmony with the original intention, to turn out to the lowering of the social plane. You can fool the Soul

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

Maker some of the time, but not for everlasting. The chief reason why polygamy has been dropped by the dominant races is that it does not "work."

From the point at which it becomes fixed in the national consciousness, that nation goes forward lamely, like a man with one side of him paralysed. For polygamy is not the least vicious of the daughters of the dragon's teeth. It followed naturally on the decimations of war and had the original sanction of necessity. It was bolstered by the primitive obligation of women to bear and rear and to keep on bearing though they died of it. Nature, who never meant that the mother-instrument should go dishonoured, so arranged the rhythm of the mating impulse that the function rose to the demand upon it; for nature is both exigent and expedient. It served its term, but even now, as the last word on polygamy

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

as an institution is being said by the dominant races to the sons of the harem, the polygamous habit, relegated to a not too obtrusive privacy, still lumbers our sexual evolution.

Valda caught at that. If we admitted that it was still going on, though aside and in corners, wouldn't it be on the whole more honest to bring it out into the light and live with it openly?

To which I might have replied that it was merely our careless human habit, first to banish the incumbering propensity below stairs, and then to the back door of the social establishment, where it lingered too long, no doubt, breeding pestilence, before it was finally dumped with the waste of civilisation. That I didn't so figure our public disapprobation was due to the pains I was at to define for her the difference between irregularities which are the reflexes

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

of incompetent methods of mating, and those which are reduced under pressure to an exchange of commodities. I meant completely to show her where she stood, free from any stone throwing of mine, as one to whom mate-love had happened outside the legal bond, as it so pitifully can happen among our well meant misadjustments.

It wasn't in me then, or ever, thank Heaven, to make for the secret woman a brand and burning out of mere secrecy, nor to heap on right passion, fretting its way through all our foolish conspiracies, the stigma of the furtive indulgence. I had my own opinion of the Reactionist, but, since I couldn't express it there without making poor Valda see herself as the victim of worse things than I was willing she should imagine, it seemed best to go on to the kind of thing that leads periodi-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

cally to the appointment of vice commissioners.

§

Just as the nations have dropped off polygamy, so they are in the process of eliminating prostitution, not because it interferes with any religious or traditional taboo, but on the plain ground that it is hurtful to our social health. The trouble with all vice investigations is that we are a business people. The selling point is for most of us the point of moral departure. We feel that we have measured the enormity of the situation when we know how many dollars are turned over in the trade in a particular precinct.

But the truth is that almost anybody will sell if the pinch be hard enough and the price at hand. And always there is somebody in the condition of having

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

to sell whether or no. It is the buyers who proceed solely from their own initiative.

What, then, over and above the momentary gratification, do they buy? What is the consideration which leads them, when the number of willing and necessitous sellers fails, to seduce and drug and abduct in order that there may be more of such forced sales on the market? Undoubtedly the great majority of women who go down into the Pit find their occasion in poverty, in definite, relievable needs of food and knowledge and entertainment; but the fact that violence must be resorted to in order to keep up the supply even in cities, where the pinch of poverty is most severe, puts economic pressure out of the question as the primary cause of prostitution. It is a major factor merely in determining which women shall be prostitutes: the lonely, the over-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

worked, the starved of beauty and affection, the ignorant and the too tenderly trusting, they fall or are dragged into the trap of the ever-gaping demand. And this demand is very simple, I think, the demand for sex relations unaccompanied by moral responsibility.

§

"But love," Valda insisted in the shibboleth of the Reactionist, "should be free."

If it is, nature didn't make it so. Automatically the act of loving ties up with it those who love and the unborn.

No sooner do we begin upon it than we enter upon certainties of affecting the happiness of the one who loves with us and the potential third. It is so little free that we can neither go out of it nor into it on the mere invitation, nor abate by saying so one of the widening circles of its disaster.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

Whether for better or worse, love is irrevocably tied to its consequences.

The proof of this universal conscious binding up of moral responsibility with an act, is to be found in the universal practise of paying something to get rid of it. The price of love that is sold is a money indemnity for the loyalty, tenderness, and care, which by that payment are acknowledged to belong naturally with loving.

One has not to go very far back, no further in fact than the time when women began to rate their potential reproductive function in terms of maintenance, to find the point at which man undertook to compound his potential obligation with haunches of venison and strings of shells. It is possible to go back a little further among tribes where promiscuity is sporadic, as with many North American aborigines, to discover that it is neither incidental nor

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

economic, but temperamental. Here and there an individual is born with a blind spot for this particular form of responsibility, as with tone deafness or a lack of colour discrimination. Such a one is neither ostracised nor exempted from communal labours, but accepted as an accidental and doubtful variant, a bird with a speckled feather. It is the pressure of the complex organisation which makes of harlotry a profession. Its real offensiveness is not in the coin that changes hands, but in that the race is not served by it.



If this were not so then there could be no reason why love should not be sold as readily as music or pictures. The valid objection to the Selling Class is not the price, but the fact that toxins are generated in that

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

class which poison the whole body of society. In spite of all that men can do about it, the money paid does not pay; it merely scatters and shifts the accounting.

This being the case, it becomes important to inquire, not so much who can be induced to sell, as who buys and on what compulsion.



Two classes chiefly resort to the streets where love is sold: the young and unmated, and those in whom marriage has failed to satisfy a demand felt to be rational. There are also some preternaturally vicious who shall be left where they belong, with the pathologist.

The difficulty of the young is an honest one, arising as it does in the circumstance that the mating propensity develops some years in advance of the time when it is thought wise or desirable to assume the com-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

plex responsibilities of marriage. It is an ancient problem this, appearing as a matter of tribal consideration as early as the period of chipped flint. But for its persistence we have largely to thank the extraordinary lumpiness and inchoateness of modern education.

With the best intention in the world, we have no better plan than for youth to take all its book-learning in a lump, and then marriage and the rearing of a family lumped by itself, and, particularly in the case of women, fenced off from all other forms of experience. Finally only in middle life do the original pair, more or less warped and subdued by their long dislocation in the interest of special functions, become proper members of society. Thus the normal use of marriage is overbalanced by its being made to assume the aspect of a state, an occasion. Any readjustment which

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

would make life and education of one continuous warp and woof would greatly lessen the strain at this point. It is not marriage alone, but all the primary human processes which suffer from our ranking of trade and school and empire as enterprises to live for rather than to live by.

The remedy is one that society must move determinedly to seek not only in educative processes, but in readjustments of the industrial system.

"Yes?" said Valda.

I recognised the rising inflection as one that marked her as a member of that group called, and perhaps calling themselves, "the Intellectuals," who out of sessions of vast, inchoate talk, draw somehow the assurance that anything said of the industrial system is said on their side. It is an inflection with nuances such as greet the introduction into the conversation of a choice scan-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

dal, though I don't know for what reason except that the present industrial situation is, in view of our moral pretension, highly scandalous. My business, however, is with the personal conduct of male and female. I can tell where the economic pressure impinges on the private relation, at what point the struggle for existence disturbs the balance of sex, and how the intention of the Soul Maker is thwarted by stony accretions of industrial injustice. In so far as the demand for cheap, temporary substitutes for marriage is the result of industrial insufficiency, it is only to be cured by the resolution of the whole social disorder. But it is not necessary here to determine anything of the method by which industrial reorganisation is to be effected except that it is a mistake to tie up marriage with it.

The right to mate is a primary human right. It encloses in its contingent possi-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

bilities not only the seed of the race but the spark of divinity, beauty, art, altruism, the knowledge of the fatherliness of God and the imminence of Power. The family is a more vital human arrangement than the factory. The industrial system, under whatever name, must reshape itself plastically about the right to love and to multiply.

The immediate predicament of society is that it is unable to provide opportunity for right marriage to vast hordes of men in standing armies. The adventurous trades, mining, bridging, building, are roaring full of the free companies of industry, homeless, tieless. All the ways of work are clogged with shoals of mateless women. All the prows of progress are manned by fine souls too bent upon errands of the Soul Maker to stay for the wearing complications of the usual. Marriage, attempting to stretch it-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

self from point to point of this disorder, parts upon occasions which begin to show too soon the edges of decay. Many of the phases of the social evil are but so many witnesses to inefficient industrial organisation and are due to disappear in a more intelligent readjustment.

§

But when all is said and done for those who buy light love because society takes no pains to afford them the one better thing, we have still to deal with those who demand from love the things it was never meant love should be called upon to pay.

Chief of all its incitements is the opportunity the street provides for aptitudes held over from the time when combat was the major process of living—male vanity, suborned to the industrial routine, the dominant attitude, the spirit of the chase.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

Over in the red light district, man is the hunter, the mover of the game. There he re-enters the hereditary tract, releases his cramped and unexcised barbarisms, relives his little day. And for a long time he has fondly believed that the price he pays guarantees that nothing shall come out of it to trouble his soberer occupations. Nothing so disconcerts him as the light of modern research thrown on the things that, in spite of him, do come out of it and spread foul traces round his home.

It is not what society is going to find out about his favourite pastime that renders publicity objectionable, but what he isn't going to be able to avoid finding out about himself. It is for us all to face and force into the social consciousness the recognition of the spirit of the chase as a prime factor in much that menaces the love-life of the community.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

It goes back, this demand for the element of sport in mating encounters, not only to the primitive, predatory habit, but to marriage customs the meanings of which have long been lost to common knowledge.

Not only are the facts of primitive matings lost and overlaid by popular misinformation, but all our thought about them has become tinged with a far-derived male predilection. It seems almost as much a pity as cheating a child of Santa Claus to strip the present-day apostle of red-bludginess of his shrieking mate dragged by her long tresses to his lair; but the truth is that the nearer we get to bruteness in man the farther we are from marriage by violence. Not only is there no evidence that woman in any stage showed such avoidance of her natural destiny that the use of force became customary, but, so far as proof remains in primitive rite and animal behaviour, it is all to show

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

that coquetry, as it is modernly conceived, is an acquired characteristic. In no class of warm-blooded animals does the female fight. All the passes, the struttings, the love-dances of the bird and brute world are of invitation rather than opposition. They have their rise in the varying rhythm of sex and are largely determined by the periodicity of its crises. Not even the natural hesitations of the new and unmeasured experience produce or imply, in any species, acts of violence. Neither the wild wolf nor the roaring lion assaults his mate. The doe flees, but she flees in a circle; she surrenders not to any struggle, but to the procreant urge. Whatever element of conquest enters is between the opposing males. While they rage around her she awaits placidly the approach of the victor.

The human male, when he issued from animality, added to the possible contest with

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

rivals of his own class, the necessity of winning his bride from an alien or hostile group. Marriage by capture means the capture of the woman from the males of her own family; there is no implication whatever of her being ravished from herself. Where no tribal prohibition intervened, the maid was still to be won from the chaperonage of her mother and from customs that had all the force of a taboo.

It is scarcely known, or if known not estimated at its proper worth, that tribes still in the stone age of culture have fine appreciations of the value of chastity, of the social menace of promiscuity and the expedience of too early marriage, with carefully worked out rituals and observances for enforcing the same. The ceremonies undergone by the aboriginal youth on attaining majority, which is usually about the age of fifteen, almost always include vows of

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

chastity to be kept until marriage. In short, the social environment of marriage among healthy tribes is built up, not around the idea of the unwilling and brutishly enforced bride, but as a bulwark against the natural inclination of woman toward her racial service.

The element of contest, where it enters, is a concession to the idea of struggle which became so early fixed in the man mind by the clash of the dominant males. In the hairy period of his evolution, winning a bride "off the old man" must have been the great adventure. The lover continuing to demand the strategic encounter, the sweat of combat, the swelling of victory, demands them of woman in default of male relatives who would rather she'd marry than not.

I do not mean to impute too much of duplicity to the impulse which, out of that divine quality of givingness so native to the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

woman breast, leads her to supply to man's less plastic stuff the stimulating touch. Still less is it implied that the mere condition of womanliness lays one open to any solicitation. Against the unloved lover the defence of women is to scuttle and flee like all other defenceless, soft-bodied things; and among all lovers it is only man who puts femininity to such indignity. But once the mate is recognised, the whole course of her being is set toward surrender; the need of trusting is stronger in her than experience. Shall the indomitable purpose be thwarted by a trick? Against nature, however, some things experience has taught her.

The practice of coquetry, that is the enhancing of the pleasures of mating by pretended restraints, received its greatest impetus during the barbaric ages when man had come so far in his conquest of the brute forces that he could turn his attention from

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

them to the conquest of his brother man. Women, rendered cheap by polygamy and slavery, must needs raise themselves out of the condition of drudgery by whatever available means. They played, as slaves perforce must, on the susceptibilities of their masters. What then should they play with but the preferred toys and entertainment of the time? They reproduced, in all the colour and harmony of femininity, the motifs of the battle and the chase.

In those dark ages of womanhood, women, in order to win a little of their proper inheritance of security and care, defeminised themselves, made, in the modern and so opprobrious term, "men of themselves"—hunters and gamesters.

The red light district, then, is the last stand of the hunted women. Here they supply, on such compulsions as the industrial stupidity of the period metes out to

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

them, the unsatisfying satisfaction of an atavistic appetite. And this is what youth looks on in the process that is euphemistically referred to as "seeing life," bright with dolphin colours of decay. For the business of women is not conquest nor pursuit, but reproduction and conservation.

§

"I see," said Valda, after a long pause, "it's all that life has left them of adventure."

"All that business has left," I corrected her. "Business has been so predetermined by the Big Ones that it isn't much of an adventure, and religion isn't. Time was when one could have brave encounters with saints and gods and spirits of the dead, but now if you venture upon anything of the kind you are turned over to the insanity commission, or at the least to psychical research."

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

But the efficacy of passion as a means of accelerating the pulse of life, is thrust upon us. In literature, in music and the drama it is still the indispensable adventure. In middle life, when natural elasticity begins to fail, men reaching out blindly for the old, energising sources fall readily on the love relation.

There is nothing comes so easily to hand. If one follows it into a by-path, it is usually because it is only there he can follow it without disturbing the peace of lives long linked with his. He of necessity buys off the moral responsibility because he has already all of that commodity he can well carry. There is many a pitcher of respectability goes full of stolen waters.

I had to put out my hand over Valda's locked fingers to still the rising exclamation which failed to discriminate between a perfectly good excuse for doing a thing

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

and the thing being good for us when it is done.

Probably the number of those who buy love because they can imagine nothing better for themselves is not so great as the number of those who could get nothing better in any case. What gives us the right to interfere is the final outcome to society.

It is against these two classes, those who for social or industrial reasons are unable to mate properly, and those who, mated or not, must still indulge a vestigial propensity, that any proposition for the cure of the social evil must be directed. It will be a great gain to know that no woman must sell herself for bare sustenance, but it is important to remember that so long as the demand exists there will be some kind of price found at which somebody will surrender. That society will in time dispose of the buying and selling of love just as it has rid it-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

self of chattel slavery I see no reason to doubt. It will have more leisure then to deal with a growing class who take love without paying anything.

§

Within the last quarter century we have come clearly to recognise and define a type of industrial parasite who taps the veins of profit without accounting or return, as the money grafter. More vicious and insidious even is the as yet untabulated love pirate, the grafter in the precious stuff of personality. There is a tendency always in the more sophisticated states to make of the finer phases of human intercourse an achievement and an end, and this is the beginning of desuetude.

But when they go further and make of love a mere enhancement of the passing time, there ensues a condition compared to

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

which the paid traffic of the street is an obvious and remediable evil. For this sort of love goes masquerading in the most endearing of the lighter phrases, the chiffons, one might say, of grand passion. It assumes the bearing of a superior freedom. Its technique is admirable. And it does not pay anything.

To the love grafters money is as offensive a price as children or loyalty or long suffering. Love—what is called love—for them exists at its perfectness only when most detached from all possible occasions for affecting anything; the more sterile, the more desirable. Love for love's sake is the shibboleth by which they blunt the unsailable fact that love was not invented for love's sake but for life's. They—one must continue with the inclusive pronoun because pirating of this sort is as likely to be an offence of one sex as the other—count that

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

venture most successful which achieves the most complete inutility. This, by the very nature of love, being a doubtful performance, the love pirate preys usually on the wives of his neighbours or upon the young, on anybody not in a position to enforce against him the logical consequences of the relation. He arrives at the effect of there being no consequences by being able to ignore them.

This kind of grafting is beyond the jurisdiction of the police, but it marks the quality of the practitioner as descriptively as a rating in Bradstreet's. For, when not actually the evidence of arrested development, this refined sort of promiscuity is the result of poverty of the imagination and spiritual indolence. Such as these love love so long as it is easy; in short they are of the stripe of the lovers of "easy money." Their mating is after the manner of those savages who

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

can count to five, but for a larger number can only count to five again on the other set of fingers.

Having counted the opening moves of invitation, chase and surrender, they begin again with a new set of pawns the same infantile progressions, never aware that the real value of mate-love, the determining experience, lies just beyond the point of arrested development. For the best love is not given away; it is the purchase of self-abnegation.



The moon was going down behind the pines, cold and jewel bright. In the deep shadow of the hill in which the house was engulfed I could hear Valda crying. She had found, I knew, the answer to all her questionings, the secret woe of abandoned women; an answer so world-old that if men

LOVE AND THE SOUL-MAKER

had stopped to hear it—but that sort of men do not stop, they find grief of such proportions indelicate.

“He never paid!” she said; the knowledge welled up in her rendingly. He had never paid to her sincerity the tribute of faith or loyalty or understanding. She had clung to him at first, to draw him back to the one self-forgetting act which should have marked his knowledge of her love as a thing higher than his pleasure. And he had not come back. She was torn now by realising that light love is light because it has no such knowledge. For Valda is a good woman, and, under whatever social misadventure, good women are distinguishable from bad by just this capacity for knowing that the proper end of loving is not personal but racial; it is the Soul Maker’s most precious commodity.

TO VIOLET LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

What she cried for there in the dark was not the loss of her lover, but of that oblation which should be paid to love as on an altar.

V

IT was not until two or three days later that we came to the question of marriage, one of those full-leaved summer afternoons so crowded with green growth that there was no room in it even for Valda's pain. We had come down from the house to the old stone bridge and sat watching the water slip by us as mindlessly as the flight of time. On every side the leaves of the rock maples lapped over smoothly like plumage on a breast, and the limpid creek took on green reflections between the leopard-coloured stones. We had talked during the morning altogether of other things, for which reason it seemed inevitable that in the first full pause we should revert to the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

matter which lay closest to our minds without other introduction.

"Why is it," Valda wished to know, "when there are so many evidences in favour of marriage as we practise it, so many marriages fall short of just the purpose they seem meant to serve?"

It was necessary for me to remind her that I hadn't said that the evidence was in favour of marriage altogether as we practise it.

All I had claimed was the sanction of the Soul Maker for permanent, exclusive matings; which is not saying that the purpose of marriage might not be thwarted by the decorations and conventions which we attach to the condition of being married. I would even go so far as to premise that the initial mistake about marriage is in regarding it as a condition, a state, when it is primarily a relation. Stripped to its essentials,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

marriage is an agreement between any pair to practise mate-love toward one another, *with intention*. A vast amount of our modern marriage custom is as extraneous to this as is that temple in India to the hair of the prophet's beard which it enshrines.

There is undoubtedly such a thing as race hypnosis—a state of mind induced by the recurrence of certain incidentally associated acts, until it becomes impossible to think of one without the other. It has happened with mate-love that, being more conveniently practised under certain conditions, and the children better taken care of under other particular arrangements, these have so grown together in the general mind as to take on the authority of moral precedent. It is the sum of these conveniences which makes up the mode of marriage in any country. Sometimes they are organised about essential values, but quite as often they are

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

reflections of the current religion or the misapprehension of natural facts peculiar to the country which produced them. Their extraneous character is shown by the circumstance that, viewed over a great space of history, they are seen to change, and to change in such degree that what was at one time the imperative duty or privilege of one sex in marriage becomes, in the course of several thousand years, the privilege and obligation of the other.

The average view, however, does not include anything like even one thousand years. It is centred on the generation at hand, with a tolerant survey of the one just past and an apprehensive and often reprehensive glimpse of the generation coming. And behind it all is the reiterative stroke on stroke of centuries of associative practice, biassing the mind. It is small wonder, then, that the mode in which marriage has been

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

carried on should become so identified with the essential process of mate-love that it is sometimes easier to dissolve the marriage than to learn to conduct it in a new fashion. For it will be seen on very little examination that many people who are unhappy within marriage are so, not from any violation of its primary requirements, but because one or the other of them has believed that some long-established mode, say of housewifery in the woman or money-making in the man, is a part of the divine ordinance.



We shall get nowhere with the discussion of marriage without a clear distinction between the things inherent in the relation, and those which from time to time have proved convenient to it. It might even pay to overdo the matter of distinction if it

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

would save either member of a married pair from foisting personal preferences on the other in the name of the eternal verities.

"But marriage is so personal," Valda began to say.

About as personal as getting a living or an education. Love, quite as much after marriage as before it, has its own way with us. It is no more possible to be married all to oneself than it is to go to school that way. At every turn we are overshadowed by the racial experience. And, since love does not always sing in the ecstatic key, it is important in moments of dryness and doubt to be able to turn with certainty to the profoundest moods and interpretations which such experience has revealed to us. The attempt to derive the authority for marriage modes from revealed religion has blinded the general intelligence to their natural derivation from experimentation.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

Under all the stupidities of civilisation there is still operative in man an instinct as self-preservative as the movement of the natural animal to reject unsuitable food. By study, all forms and modes of marriage are seen to resolve themselves into the working of this instinct to prevent the too early withering of mate-love before its purpose is accomplished. The impulse which rejects the word "obey" from the marriage service is one with the impulse which retains "honour and cherish." What it means is simply that we have discovered that obedience has nothing to do with the permanence of love, but that no set of experiments has revealed a way to keep it alive and alight without honour and cherishing. Whether its ultimate purpose be to rear children or to enrich the race by raising the plane of personal achievement, so long as there remains anything of that purpose unaccom-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

plished, the primary obligation of lovers is to love. It is around this working necessity that the duties and proprieties of marriage are centred, from it they take their sole extenuation or compulsion. To love and to keep on loving. This is the one way of making marriage do its work in the world. Any call for reorganisation of the fashion of living together, such as arise from time to time in our changing social environment, must conform itself to this necessity. It must derive its authority not from any pre-existing code of ethics or religion, but from its capacity to nourish the eternal need of each for the other.



Confronted with any of the surprises of the modern feminist movement, it has been a perfectly legitimate question to ask whether or not, under heretofore unexperi-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

enced conditions, men and women will continue to love one another. It is so important that they should go on doing so that we may be forgiven for failing to see on all occasions that it is also important that they should do so without capitulation. It has taken a century of hesitancies and flutters to arrive at the sane conclusion that human rights of self-development and social service are aids to successful marriage rather than infringements of it. But we have not yet rid ourselves of the particular blind spot which made such long confusion possible: we are still attempting to establish the spiritual values of marriage on the testimony of a highly specialised minority.

I do not refer now to the poets who have written of love with a temperamental bias; to learned men with a no less pernicious bias of sapless intellectuality; churchmen

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

with a bias fixed by a long antedated revelation; nor yet to the women who have written of it with one eye aslant to see what men will think of them; nor to the great prophets of sex who have arisen in this later day, whom we still wait for time to confirm to us. I refer to the patent fact that most of the material from which we build an ideal of marriage values, comes from, or is directed toward, that class of whom the Lady of the House is the accepted type. Our expressed judgment is largely conditioned, in respect to the particular mode, by its relevance to the type rather than to a racial use. The excellent, club-fed male, whose personal equation is rated by his competitiveness, educated at universities where nobody ever learns any of the things one needs to know about the important functions of husbanding and fathering, has developed the Lady of the House under a system which

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

involves the suppression of her most prized attributes in some others of her species, without being able at the same time to adduce any evidence of her being the preferred racial instrument.

For the most notable characteristic of this type, the species mark, is its failure to maintain itself in the face of any reasonable labour to live. All the modes of her ladyhood are in the nature of a performance, a triumph of technique rather than an expression of reality. In the absence of the protecting mate, or of a plenitude of less cherished members of her own sex to assume the drudgery of her state, the Lady of the House is quickly reabsorbed into the tribe of women. But no type can be of value for founding a racial procedure which can not survive that prime necessity of making a living.

There might be more excuse for our con-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

tinuing to derive our notions of ideal marriage from the numerically small group, divided by every issue of their lives from the working majority, if it could be shown that the experimental values of marriage, those which are concerned with holding the pair together, were unfavourably affected by reasonable labour. We vex our time to think out the proper relation of the sexes when the answers to most of the questions we ask ourselves lie all about us in the daily lives of the voiceless companies exiled by trade from green fields and the sun. We find marriage proceeding there to its unalterable purpose in direct contradiction to the most cherished modes of the ideal mongering classes. Millions of self-supporting women are deeply loved; women working "outside the home," the anathema of the Lady of the House, have been fought for; and women not at all becomingly gowned and not al-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

ways immaculately clean, have inspired lifelong devotions.

The question as to what men and women may do to be loved is largely a class question, and invalid without the indicator of the class thought desirable to be loved by. Not only does the Soul Maker appear to derive no advantage from the millinery of marriage, but it is even possible that the splitting up of the initial racial impulse into an infinitude of subtleties is in itself the evidence of something lost which may be recovered by a study of marriage under conditions in which the values are still factual.

§

Valda was sufficiently subdued. "You mean," she ventured, "that we think too much of what we feel, and think it important because we feel it?"

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

But I meant a little more than that in fact; not only the modes but many of the emotions which in our social group have gathered about marriage, are associative rather than generic. They borrow too much from the setting, they shine by the reflected light of art and literature.

The natural result of a highly spiritualised ideal of mate-love is an attempt to make it do too much for us, to answer for too many things. Women are the worst offenders in this. Passion must be not only pure air and fire to them, but bread and meat; it must be enforced to do the work of religion in raising the spiritual plane, and manifest itself in all the many faceted culture of the time. There are women who think themselves unsuitably mated if the note to which they are raised by a picture or an opera does not tune with the domi-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

nant key of their relation to their husbands, and they blame, not themselves nor the picture, but the husband.

If one wants conviction on this point one has only to examine the so-called ladies' journals for the quality of advice, instruction, and consolation offered to the married, to realise that, however much they may have laid hold of individuality, there is little passing current in that class which could withstand for a day the assaults of reality. In spite of a few notable instances where the life of the lover has been keyed to the very highest pitch of personal passion, there is no evidence that the attempt to colour the whole of existence with the consummating movement of right love results in anything but spreading it thinner.

What we really need to know about it is not the power to which mate-love may be raised when played upon by all the ex-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

ponents of modern culture, but the sum of its common factors.

§

It is not only the fallibility of women to attempt to make love fill out the whole round of life for them, but they go further and undertake, not without excuse in the social compulsion which robs them of other forms of activity, to make of marriage a career. They try to find in it a substitute for something to do, for all the varied possibilities to which they in common with their brothers are born, which smoulder and ache in them and breed dizzying vapours. All doors but marriage being closed to women for attaining eminence, social position, fortune, human contacts, they demand it all of marriage, and by the evidence of the divorce court, marriage is breaking down under the strain.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

Now that housewifery, with all its more important functions performed outside the home in factories and food shops, leaves the intelligence so largely disengaged, the discovery of the insufficiency of marriage as a determining condition has rushed upon us. Unions in which the relation has proved entirely competent for the primary purpose of loving and rearing children, fail miserably before the necessity of satisfying all the hungry human demands of women. Comes now the steadying moment when we begin to wonder if it were not wiser to relieve the strain upon marriage than so lightly to dissolve it. The necessity under which the industrial system finds itself of taking account of the woman needs of female workers has reacted upon our attitude toward the human needs of women. We begin to perceive that marriage has to do chiefly with sex, and that sex is only one of

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the departments of life and not—no, not even for women—the whole of it.

“But the question of maintenance,” Valda began——

—Is primarily a problem of economics rather than of sex. It is derived from the industrial situation rather than from anything inherent in the relations of men and women. “Maintenance” is a term very loosely used to imply the right of a woman to demand that her husband should perform all labours outside the home which are involved in the business of raising a family. It by no means indicates that she is to be relieved of indoor labours no matter how arduous they may be. It does not carry with it the right to be maintained in the event of the husband’s failure or death, nor does it even imply any standard.

Interpretations of the term are local and periodic; they are even narrower, and be-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

come the mere shibboleths of a class. The whole idea of maintenance takes validity from the potential maternity of the wife, for only when incapacitated by the bearing or rearing of children is the wife logically entitled to be "supported." The advisability of extending this support over the whole of the woman's life rests on its ultimate effect on her child-bearing capacity, a point upon which students of economics disagree. The only circumstance which would render maintenance a marriage "right" would be the existence of a social system which made self-supporting work by women improper or impossibly difficult. In so far as men have committed themselves to these two absurdities, they are bound to accept as legitimate the demand of women to be kept in idleness. The recent movement toward state aid for penniless mothers is evidence of a growing public conviction

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

that maintenance is not so much a right as a compensation for services performed. But the fact is that the number of women who are exclusively "maintained" without the necessity of hard and exacting work of some kind, is inconsiderable. Here in America it has always been an ideal rather than an accomplished state of things. For the preferred mode of marriage still shapes itself about the old feudal ideal of the lord of the house and the lady châtelaine, the armoured, valiant male going forth to the daily battle of trade, and returning with his spoils to refresh himself in the presence of the mother-priestess who performs in his absence the daily miracle of looking well to her household and still preserving herself in a state of smudgeless charm.

It is the ideal of a numerically small but important group, important enough to have

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

put it into poetry and picture and song, where it remains still in all its false and alluring perspectives. For the one thing that the picture fails to present to us is the fact that never could it have so much as shaped itself as an ideal in the racial imagination, except under conditions which precluded the possibility of its being attainable by more than the few who showed it forth. The ideal of the mistress-wife and mother-priestess is indissolubly associated with the idea of a serving class. Never at any time in the world's history has this ideal existed except upon a background of retainers, slaves, serfs, servants, concubines, captives, or other dependents who by the condition of such service were forever precluded from enjoying on their own account the state which they existed to maintain. The very word family was originally a descriptive term to include not only those born in

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the household but bound into it by hire or purchase.

Never since man emerged from the tribal state has the whole work of feeding and comforting and rearing the children been done by the house mother in the better conditioned families. What we mean in fact by better conditioned and "best" families is just those families in which all the work has not to be done by the châtelaine. The struggle of every man in a democracy to obtain these conditions for his own wife and children has resulted in the work which was formerly done by dependents within the household being now done by specialists outside it. During the last three centuries the modal history of marriage has been the history of the gradual emergence of the serving class into the class of householders. Yet here in America, come up from varied parentage, with clashing traditions, by sys-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

tems of education waveringly aimed at the ascending scale of living, we are still stupidly trying to pour all this unlikely material into a mould which met its determining circumstance long before the rise of democracy. Everywhere we see married pairs attempting to organise a home about some tattered remnant of the old ideal and rending one another because they fail at it.

§

It is not alone by antedating our marriage modes by some centuries that we come to misadventure, but quite as much because all our modes are coloured by the two most mischievous of social misapprehensions. These are that the worth of a man is determined by the goods he can get together, and the worth of a woman by what she can induce men to feel about her. All our sex values are tinged by this last just as all our

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

material values take colour from the first. Unconsciously, perhaps, but none the less surely, the selective principle derived from it is at work, overlaying the racial instinct with secondary considerations.

When women chose the best food-getters because they were irresistibly attracted toward the qualities of initiative, readiness, and skill which distinguished them among the tribesmen, then they worked with the Soul Maker. But when the choice of men with dollars is made only after overcoming by an effort the repugnance occasioned by traits which make the accumulation of dollars possible, there is evident a racial back-sliding. Beauty was a bright beacon in the hands of the Great Experimenter, for it led the desire of youth to the fittest numbers; but beauty cultivated as a lure and sought for the effect it produces, is the undoing of both those who draw and are drawn by it.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

So long, however, as the things a woman may do for her children are dependent wholly on the earning capacity of their father, women must choose money-getting mates, for women choose not only for themselves but for their offspring. This is the serious predicament into which society has got itself. For the betterment of the species it must either contrive that the wealth of the world shall fall into the hands of those best fitted for propagation, or the responsibility for the upbringing of the young must pass from the hands of the individual parent to society at large. Marriage cannot find its way alone out of this coil; nor is it for the exponents of any particular form of marriage to offer the determining vote. The failure of all institutional substitutes for personal parental care, as well as the known reactionary effect of personal responsibility upon character and mentality,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

would seem to point away from the assumption of that responsibility by the state. The original intention of mate-love itself, with its implication of permanence, does more than imply the purpose of the Soul Maker. It seems to say, by its effort to hold the consanguineous group together, that there is something to be gotten out of that binding-up of interests that is not collectible from the social group, something that in too easy a dissolution of the natural bond will be regrettably missed.

§

However it may finally be resolved, this disposition to estimate men by the amount of their property is the vermiform appendix of our social judgment. Originating in a time when getting was the sole criterion of fitness to survive, it has become the seat of many active disorders, most pernicious

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

of which is the reversion of the Soul Maker's appraisement of women. For women, so early as they became property in any degree, were chosen to serve the immediate interests of their proprietors—that is to say, their greeds, passions, and prejudices, rather than the uses of society.

It is along the line of this misapprehension as to the true values of femininity that we are inducted into the most pitiable of all mating follies—I mean the folly of made love.

Loving is so natural that, given a free social interplay of the sexes, it will spring up as wholesomely as grass under rain. Under the restrictions of civilisation the need of loving tends to satisfy itself, out of whatever meagre and incompetent material is offered, by the creation of illusion.

Added to the narrow social life which poverty, class prejudice or the accidents of

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

environment force upon us, is the terrible necessity to marry somehow, anyhow, but still to marry, which is laid on women by the perversion of feminine values. Deprived of free association with those whom they might naturally love or be loved by, young people, incited by desire, by the mating propensity, with the aid of fiction and the poets, will build up out of the most inapposite material a kind of stage effect of love, which too often reveals its staginess only to the later high lights of marriage.

The mischief of made love is not altogether its theatrical character—all love-making is along the line of self-dramatisation—but the fact that it is sprung from that subornation of the mating practice brought about by the servitude of women.

In the beginning the female waited in placidity while the males brandished their antlers, displayed their brilliant plumage

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

about her. She chose not who vanquished her, but who showed himself the superior of his fellows. If she entered the game at all it was merely to provide them an occasion to make show of admirable qualities. But women, made plentiful by war, cheapened, to secure their mating rights plotted and inveigled. They played, but they could not play with realities. For the virtue of woman is secret; it manifests in long-suffering, in patience and foresightedness, in chastity and kindness, in the wide hip and the flowing breast; it was meant for service, not for showing. Women when they court can adduce no evidence of their racial fitness; to do so is to show themselves unfit. The most they can do is to make themselves desirable, and withhold gratification until they have secured their point, the certificated relation. They play the game of courtship, then, not with attributes, as in

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the beginning men had to play it, but with effects. They win not by making themselves indispensable to the Soul Maker, but to the appetites of men. And the judgment on them is that they are still rated too much by the reactions they can set up in a particular man rather than by their contribution to society. That all this is contrary to the nature of women is shown by their quick abandonment of the means, once the end is attained; by the inverse ratio of their capacity to make men feel to the index of their racial worth; by the repugnance of the better sort of women toward making any effort at all to arouse the interest and attention of men. Whether men know it or not, women know that when a man says of a woman that she "won" him, he has said almost the worst thing for the quality of her attraction.

All this is too much covered up, glanced

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

at too obliquely. It has to be, otherwise young women, ignorant of the real bearing of many of the things they are trained in, would revolt. That they revolt in numbers against the indignity of measuring their behaviour by its possible effect on a hypothetical suitor, and against the preciousness of emotion which establishes the high ground of conventional femininity, is a hopeful augury. It marks the return of reality to our mating behaviours.

VI

THE thing that marriage can be legitimately asked to do for us is, first of all, to satisfy the hunger of the body for its natural mate. This is indispensable. Herein is the seed of its own permanence, the only legitimate ground for the satisfaction of that other great human demand, the desire for offspring. And finally it must satisfy the need of companionship on the intimate and personal side of life. Undoubtedly the happiest marriages are those which carry the sense of companionship into the farthest, finest ramifications of thought and endeavour, but there can, in the nature of things, be no compul-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

sion beyond the personal interest. To be proud of and pleased with each other, to be concerned for each other's health, considerate of each other's interests, active in comfort and care, is much more important than a common taste for Italian poetry or a mutual detestation of Wagnerian opera. It is possible for a married pair to survive being bored with one another's opinions or pleasures, but it is indispensable that they should not be bored with one another.

There may be a few other items required by the particular instance, but I know of nothing else which may be insisted upon as a universal concomitant of marriage. Simple as these conditions seem, a great many matings fail of them, chiefly because we aren't always satisfied to have it as simple as that, but go on asking of marriage the things it was never meant to pay; because,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

simple as these two things are, we haven't yet arrived at any competent method of knowing when we are getting them, and because, as I said at the beginning, we are often more concerned with marriage modes than with the inherent principles of mating.

§

What must be insisted upon for the improvement of marriage before it is entered upon, is the clarification of our ideas about it. We must see its naked power upon us for what good and what generic ill. Stripped of all the rag-tag of obsolescent modes, all the bright, tasteless tinsel of sentiment by which its vital functions are obscured, we must accept it first and last as a sex relation, striking its proper note in the chord of human endeavour, and seeing it thus uncomplicated by problems of food

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

and shelter, learn to ask no more of it than that it fulfil itself as the great adventure of sexual life.

If I have been plain on this point, I mean to be plainer. To the neglect of this primary requirement of right mating, based upon we know not what correspondences of vital impulses, what rhythms, vibrations, elusive, subtle bodily sympathies are traceable most of those evils which invest society under the particular name of "immorality." It is not wealth, not luxury, not the industrial system nor the hardening of class lines which produce those outbreaks of lasciviousness, of loose reading, of responsibility, of veiled promiscuity, which from time to time have characterised periods of national history. It is the substitution, which all these conditions foster, of other considerations of money lust, social ambition, proprietary pride, culture, of religion even, for

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the natural mating impulse. Spiritual qualities are the result of right mating and not the occasion of it, just as material success, a good home, social poise, ought to be the outcome of the matching of talent and endeavour in man and woman, and not the excuse for their living together. It is immensely more important that a mating pair should relish kissing together than that they both should be Presbyterians, and a better guarantee for their attaining the super-union which is the Soul Maker's mark.

And yet how little, how extraordinarily little, is afforded the young as a basis for selection. So far, instruction has been largely in the opinions of society; what is required is knowledge of the facts. The egoistic method of the past, in which truth was imparted or withheld according to the parental notion of need or propriety, has resulted

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

in bringing too many to the great adventure in complete ignorance of it.

Even yet we have not sufficient honest experimentation in methods of presenting the subject to the young so that it may clear the reactions which the mere contemplation of sex sets up in the unstable states of adolescence. The whole subject is shrouded in distorting mysteries, in social hesitancies and indecencies.

A very little observation of matings as they take place in society simpler than ours convinces that there is a mating instinct, a subconscious sureness by which nature flashes from young breast to young breast the knowledge of what types she would weld for the increasing of the nations. Probably if the obscuring mysteries were laid by facts made commonplace, instinct would wake again along the unfathomed outer border of the mating consciousness.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

In the absence of instinct we need knowledge and more knowledge.

§

And, if it did so awake, instinct might be easily frustrated by our narrow social contacts. Among the two or three marrying opportunities offered any one of us, it is frequently the case that not one of them provides the necessary correlation of personal interests, the common objective. The first thing to go about for the betterment of marriage conditions in general, is a deliberate provision for increased social contact. Even heaven must have room to work in.

“But their homes—their mothers——”

Valda was thinking in terms of her class, a very small class, in which parents are able to live along with their generation so successfully that their advice to their children is really worth something. They must be

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

materially able, moreover, to provide an adequate social range without the assistance of the municipality. But the generality of parents can no more do this than they can educate their children without the public schools.

As a matter of fact, the average home is one of the worst possible places for young people to court in—which is perhaps why so much courting is done on the street, in the college, at the dance hall. The average home with its one living room, its weary and self-absorbed adults, its clamorous younger children, the immanence of the parental viewpoint, the self-consciousness of youth finding itself—this is the least propitious environment for the self-explication which must come then if ever to the mating pair.

Here in America, perhaps everywhere in this pushing age, the matter is complicated

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

by the wide divergence of social ideal between parents and children. Few daughters expect or would accept the régime of their mothers; if the young people are to understand one another on this point, come together on the new ground of an advancing generation, they must be able to clear themselves of all implication of parental environment.

The unconscious recognition of this need of standing for their own future to one another drives them apart and aside. They seek out a dangerous and misleading privacy; dangerous because often secret, and misleading because two young people left absolutely to themselves can seem anything they like to each other. What is required is that they should make the tentative moves in a state of free association with their own generation. Against a background of their fellows, those with whom they must later

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

neighbour or compete, they display relative values that do not come to light in adult society. This is probably the reason why coeducational marriages show such a high percentage of successes. There are few things a young couple may not get to know about one another during four years in college.

There is another reason why the establishment of social centres for the purpose of providing free association of the young, should become the serious business of our educational leaders. It is that young people of whatever social derivation, are intrinsically entitled in their mating adventures to the best advice that their generation affords.

We do not think of trusting the teaching of arithmetic to the inexperienced parent; medical inspection is in the hands of specialists. But mating advice is left to be plucked from

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

whatever unlikely bush. Theoretically parents should be able to furnish their children with the best thought of the period at any given moment of it. Actually few have the gift for it or the time; some have not even the inclination—a state of affairs which does not make the young any less entitled to it than to the best thought about cube roots and vaccination.

§

It is possible that such increased facility for free selective activities would of itself do much to obviate one of the most obscure sources of unsatisfactory and impermanent marriages. I mean the natural differences in human capacity. It is important for any particular marriage that the parties to it retain the same ratio of development, of intellectual co-ordinations. It would seem that the intellect, like the organism, strug-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

gles to attain the limit of its type; once the limit is reached, it cannot by taking pains add anything to that. A man whose mind closes on him at thirty remains thirty for the rest of his three score years; if he be married to a woman capable of ten or fifteen years more expansion, it is hardly possible or desirable that the original bond should hold under the strain of that partition. Nothing is more heartbreaking than the mutual recognition of such disparity; it is at once so hopeless and so unblamable. Youth and charm will compensate in a degree, wealth and position obscure its most rending phases, nothing but active sexual sympathy will support it without disintegration.

It is a phase of married life which until recently has not received much sympathy. For men who discovered this disparity in their wives there has been, according as

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

they take it, the consolation of the admitted inferiority of women, or the reproach of "not keeping up," and for wives who discovered it in their husbands there has been the cry of *lèse majesté*. Had not our educators been more concerned with crediting students with percentages in fractions and geography than with determining the index of personal efficiency, we might now be in possession of some means of matching the future with the present to prevent the most flagrant disasters. What renders most mat-ing advice unacceptable is its purely hypothetical character. Young passion may flout sage waggings of the head when so many heads have wagged mistakenly. But even the young are prevented by exact knowledge.

The seven-leagued strides that have been taken in the study of personal efficiency in the interests of trade and manufacture, make

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

it not too unlikely to say that we shall soon be able to know as much about the people we marry and expose our children to the chances of marrying, as about those we hire.

"And then," Valda threw in hopefully, "there are the eugenists."

The eugenists have at once too much to say and too little. They can deal with certainty only with futures, and, though it is important to the race to know the probable physical character of its grandchildren, it is not yet proved that that has anything to do with married felicity in the present generation. One thing they can do for us, and that is to find an absolute authority for interposing a reasonable period of consideration between a demand for a licence to marry and the granting of it.

In order to protect the unborn, it is obligatory upon society to keep records and to force upon those contemplating marriage

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the knowledge of the ancestral baggage which they carry into the new venture. To do this properly something more must be shown besides the mere wish to marry. As matters now stand, any two who can make the county official believe they are of legal age can be joined for life within a couple of hours of making up their minds to it. The interim which the eugenist may demand for the proper facing of their ancestral past and correlating it with the future, would be a distinct gain in directions which have nothing to do with the increase of population.

For there are other considerations besides children, considerations which must still be met after it may be concluded that the particular pair have no contribution to make to racial continuance. Of these the eugenists not only know nothing, but may even find themselves in the serious predica-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

ment, supposing they could determine what traits are best to breed for the improvement of the species, of discovering that they are not at all those which are most auspicious for living together domestically. Bear in mind that I find this of prime importance. Racial improvement, if it means anything, means the accretion of mentality, of personal power, the accelerated pace which any two can gain while they are otherwise occupied than in multiplying. Indeed, if man is to be distinguished from the fish, the flower, the beast of the field, the existence of such general gain would seem the only excuse for propagating at all. Whatever pair has contrived to add something to what their parents were, adds it to the race as well without offspring as with them. We are all of us inheritors of the genius of great men more directly than the children of their loins; it matters nothing

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

that they leave us no descendants of their name.

Marriage then should be for the increment of social worth, and all our thought about it should be to make it serve this primal use. If the union, in the light of the most we know about it, prove suitable for children, let them count themselves twice blessed. But, if marrying be simply to breed, why, *Pithecanthropus* skipping on a hill can do as well for us. We are made men and women chiefly by what we can do for one another.

VII

WE had sat so long, subdued by languor to the mood of the place and the day, that our voices had dropped to a note scarcely louder than the water noises. Wheels went by on the bridge, raising the heavy scent of the country dust, and presently a kingfisher flitting down the long green room which enclosed it, skimmed the surface of the golden water, skimmed and splashed and flitted. Around us the warm, woman-hearted day breathed deep for peace, and somewhere, though we were not sure if it were deep within the wood or deeper in ourselves, sounded the airy, invisible laughter which is never far from women when they talk of

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

these things—are not all women encompassed so with voices—waif little souls that flock to the gates about to be drawn back? Yet all this time not a word had been said about children.

§

Not that I would abate anything of the rank of maternity in the scale of experience, but find it important to distinguish between the desire of offspring for their own sake and the normal interactions of mate-love and family life. For though in many women, and these of the finest strain, the racial instinct declares itself as the clamour of the unborn at the gates of consciousness, it is impossible to escape the conviction that much of the expressed longing for children is desire making itself known obliquely in the only form admissible to our social meticulousness. It is not thought absolutely in-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

criminating for an unmarried woman to wish for children, but we prefer her not to admit the natural hunger of the body for its mate. Yet it is passion rather than child-bearing which leads out the full chord of life; not barren women but unmated who exhibit vagaries which have a definite standing as phenomena of sex suppression. You must take it from me without particularisation that I can learn of no tribe that has not some method of avoiding the natural conclusions of marriage when, in the face of war or famine, the common welfare seems to demand it. Race suicide as we know it made its appearance as a form of race preservation. In dry years even the quail will not mate.

So far as the demand for children is actual, it must adjust itself to considerations of income, the industrial outlook, the hereditary endowment. What we have to do

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

with here is not the offspring, but the psychic reagency of parenthood modifying the form and progression of marriage. Certain manifestations of the procreant impulse are so intertwined with mate-love that they may be taken as right signs of it. In particular I refer to the nest-making propensity.



It is a question how far mother-thought has established itself by association and inheritance in the male mating consciousness, but not the most sophisticated bride can escape the disposition toward handcraft, comforting and enhancing. It is an instinct that renews itself under right loving as regularly as the turn of the year sets the forlornest spinster canary tearing the paper in its cage. The quickened appreciations of beauty and the movement toward adorn-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

ment, which are part of the self-dramatisation of the courting period, assume, when impregnation is imminent, forms from which are derived long trains of bridal customs—the nest, the linen chest, the trousseau, the engagement “shower.” The whole nature, strongly stirred, gives off overtones of the creative impulse. The high note of personal achievement which is struck by male passion finds its later feminine reverberation in altruism, even though as unconscious as the altruism of the sea bird making soft the place of her young with feathers from her breast. It is this potentiality of mate-love for reverberating throughout the organism which attaches a grave moral responsibility to its awakening in the virgin mind. Women have been shaken, the finer the more easily, into death and madness by the sudden stoppage of this master chord as delicate glass vessels may be shattered

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

by the cessation of the vibrations of a violin string.

All old literature freely and nobly expresses this active ache of the body polarised by passion for its primal function, and the sense of frustration in the crisis of which no appreciable mark remains. ("Nights I dream I hear mine crying, and I wake and find my own tears on my face," said Valda MacNath.) The begrudged concession of science to the capacity of the reproductive process for reorganising the vital forces, occasions no wonderment to the woman of average experience. The wonder would be not that the characteristics of the first born's father should be stamped on all subsequent offspring, but rather that it shouldn't. The psychic states of expectancy are almost totally unexplored by that authoritative class who give names to things, but it is known to the observing few that,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

so tonic are its interior phases, women have not infrequently been led by them to bear children when they have no natural aptitude for the care and training of the young. One suspects, too, that the capacity for sustained emotional states in women newly awakened, so surprising, even terrifying to men, is but a suspension of the body's demand, not to be quieted except by its immemorial function. Passion is the summons, the knocking at the door, which sets in array all the forces of life. The business of love is by no means just loving.

What we need at this juncture, in order to determine the full relation of mate-love and maternity, is a sound study of the effect of the psychic states of the parents and especially of the mother on the vitality and personal endowment of the child. A medical profession which insists on treating all the manifestations of pregnancy as mere re-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

flexes of physical disorder cannot get us very far with this inquiry. For it is not, at its naturalest, a disorder at all, but the supreme function of an organism; it has no more to do with disease than has the dropping of petals in the fruiting orchard. It follows then that any accompanying mental or emotional states deserve our most careful question as to their ultimate bearing on the problems of the family. At present the most we can make of them is evidence that, just as in the social state no pair marries to itself, so in the face of expectancy none loves even to itself.



To this set of reactions which are concerned with nest-making and the nurture of the young we owe the best and the worst that can come of mating procedures. Out of this has grown the ideal of the home,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

that safe and secret place of self-realisation. Out of it also has sprung that mausoleum of modern marriage, the establishment.

The desire of Things which comes upon young couples at their mating is the voice of the Soul Maker. A modern equipment of pots and beds and roofs over them is important, not to the condition of being married, but to what may reasonably be expected to come to pass after marriage. A growing appreciation of just what things are indispensable to the rearing of a family augments the sense of responsibility on this point, but the development of individual control over the incident of child-bearing keeps it from being burdensome. As a matter of fact, the actual preparation which young couples have to make to meet the contingency of offspring is much less than that required by the conditions of a

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

generation ago. Few people marry nowadays without at least a tentative understanding of how they are to meet the question of having a family. But women, even in the act of determining against child-bearing, are disposed to forget that the observance paid to the nest-making impulse is paid to its potentiality, and can in no case be claimed if the office is refused. The home, in spite of all the sentimental slop in which it is too often swamped, should be the expression of a reality. Its source is in the sacred seed of activity which lies at the core of all right passion. It is the nest, built out hour by hour in answer to an expanding need. We confuse it, by its reactions, with the presence of the beloved, with the sense of familiarity and ease which comes of our adjustment to the familiar landmark, the fireplace, the easy-chair, the ancient pine or the sunset-painted mountain. It is in fact

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

neither a place nor a state of being; it is a thing accomplished. And as such the home is less and less often found among us. Fewer people build their own houses, almost nobody makes his own furniture, linen is spun for us, carpets woven, wall decorations come no longer from the hand of the châtelaine, but are included in the builder's contract. We have substituted, in a degree, social activities for those primarily connected with mating impulses; to a very great degree the demand on the part of women for increased opportunity for such social participation, is due to the decline of nest-making. This is a natural and right substitution, for social labours such as attract women in general are conserving and protective; they are the outgrowth of the mothering activities set in motion by marriage. It is probably the logical development of soul-making that the extension of

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

feminine activity should be in this direction. It is the one thing that will save us from the establishment.

For the establishment comes fully furnished forth from the upholsterer's. It is the outgrowth not of any marrying necessity, but of the instinct for self-dramatisation which awakes under the stimulus of passion, an outgrowth, an excrescence, the tail of the peacock. It has, as Heaven be thanked all human demonstrations have, its element of superhumanness, of spiritualising grace, inasmuch as it enshrines the object of affection or arises, as it frequently does in men, in the movement of sacrifice, the laying up about the beloved of things esteemed precious, as on an altar. But when all that is said, the worst remains, which is that it takes its measure from the eye of the beholder. It is the stage setting of our relation to what is called society, the scenic

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

air and light which limn us, not as we are, but as we would like to seem to others. The impulse which preserves to us the establishment is the same that dictates the survival of monarchical forms in countries of undeniably democratic tendency. The establishment is a symbol, just as the thrones and court appurtenances are the most impressive kind of a symbol of a profound feeling for the dignity of human relations. But neither of them are indispensable to the processes either of marriage or government, and are important only as expressions of a reality. Undoubtedly there are moments in every marriage which would yield surer values if they could be lived in stately dwellings—I would have every place in which women go to bear children made noble as well as sanitary. But human experience proves nothing so much as that the establishment, as a perquisite of marriage,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

adds nothing whatever to the spiritual extensions of mate-love.

It is important to make distinctions of this kind on other grounds than opinion, for between the practical confusion of these two—the necessity for a suitable environment for the function of the family and the demand for one which shall meet the expectancy of our social set—many young couples fall into confusion. It must be woven into the texture of education that any demand on the part of woman for an establishment, houses, servants, anything over and above the requirements of child-bearing—which are much more simple than many of us are willing to believe—is an exorbitant demand. The right of a man to refuse to sacrifice his personal achievement in order to secure for his family more than the stated requirement should be recognised as a primary right, which to infringe upon

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

a woman should blush as much as to buy these things with her personal favour. The amount of worldly goods which a married pair may wish to get and enjoy together is a matter of private taste and inclination; the amount which they may reasonably demand of one another should be regulated by the fundamental family need, and has no reference whatever to personal predilection.



Woman, thrown back on bearing as her chief excuse for being, has been disposed latterly to magnify her office.

Motherhood is a service, meeting a reasonably constant racial need. If the need be sharp enough it may become an obligation, but it is in line with our latest science to constitute it a privilege rather than a right. It is only in the sense that the whole

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

round of human experience is the right of each one of us that it can be so considered. The new and sharp insistence upon the right to bear children, which has risen upon us from the old world, has no claim upon our attention except as the social maladroitness of which it is the outgrowth, can be held to be permanent and incurable. For this cry which comes from England and in one strong and certain voice from the north of Europe, demanding freedom for women to choose the fathers of their children where they will and without the obligation of the domestic tie, is primarily the cry of the unmated. It is a protest, not against marriage nor even against particular forms of it, but against the shameful waste of womanhood in enforced celibacy. It is solely due to the disequilibrium of population, owing to the deportation of men in standing armies and enterprises of colonisa-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

tion. The surplusage of women in England from these causes alone is rapidly reaching the point where some form of polygamous living is inevitable, and, if the conditions were admitted unchanging, would be advisable.

But such a cutting off of a large percentage of the population from the primary human experience is neither necessary nor unalterable; it is simply stupid. Enough men are born in any country to satisfy all reasonable mating demand of the women born there. The stupidity lies in sending them out of the country without sending the women with them, in breeding a type of woman who cannot go everywhere her man goes; most of all in the stupid persistence in organised warfare, the greatest single social obstacle to right mating. In the sense, then, that these women are prevented from the normal functions of womanhood by

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

colossal social ineptitudes, they are justified of their "right."

They have a right to a voice in the government which offers up their opportunity for racial service on the altar of Bellona; a right to admission to all the ranks of life, all the labours in which they may walk side by side with men, their mates; a right to abolish war or modify it at the points where it interferes most sorely with their womanly prerogative. In short, the right women have is not so much a right to the half loaf, the unfathered child, the uncertificated relation, as the right to readjust the conditions of society until there is room in it for normal human development.

§

"You wouldn't agree, then, with——"
Valda named one of the newly arisen prophets of sex rather timidly, "that a

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

woman is entitled to a child any way she can get it."

What I really believe is that a man is entitled to father his child by any woman who bears it. This sore egotism of woman, fevered by centuries of repression and made fierce by sex starvation, which leads her to brandish her creative function in the face of all the powers and to sink man to a mere biological necessity, serves no doubt to restore the social equilibrium. She may be forgiven at times for failing to see that it is not bearing but parenting which serves the Soul Maker, and that man has found social enlargement in the care of the young generation rather than in its begetting. Moreover, the right of any woman to have a child is no more than equal to the right of the child to what comes to him from the male parental influence. The long time during which nature has been at the pains

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

to expose the child to such influence would suggest that it is not too lightly to be dispensed with. It must not be overlooked that men need children quite as much as women need them, and the long dependence of the child on the personal care of the mother should not beguile us to blink the obvious inference. The burgeoning mind of the child requires for its due sphericity the influence of interested male companionship. Some form of polygamy, which is the ancient tribal method of correcting the waste and excess of prolonged warfare, is probably better than the divorcing of men in large numbers from their parental responsibilities. In the less self-conscious and egotistic states of society readjustments of this sort are seen always to reorganise about the needs of the race rather than the desires of men or women. There is probably something deeper than prejudice or tradi-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

tion which makes, in any society, a marked figure of the lone woman and her unparented offspring.

§

For, much as children have to do with modifying the modes of marriage, they have still more with establishing its permanence. Allowing for a normal period of gestation, at least three years of a woman's time are required to produce a child and bring it to the point where its bodily welfare is not likely to be interfered with by her own states of mind. For the rearing of three children to any pair there will be required from ten to twelve years, and another ten to bring them through the period of adolescence, years in which society must stand by to see that the peace and security of the woman are not jeopardised on any light occasion.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

Most of the modern regulations of marriage are in the nature of a guarantee that they shall not be so jeopardised. They have sprung up in the interests of society which forbids that the children of any union shall be lightly thrust back upon society for support. Quite as much they have sprung up in answer to the need of parents to be braced from without; for the adventure of the family is one in which arise many occasions for the adventurers to lean hard upon the bond that binds them to the undertaking, and need to feel its indissoluble quality. It is not alone in the strength of the performers that great things are accomplished, but in the strength of us all.

Valda began to be apprehensive.

"If you are going to say that children are an excuse for living together when there is no other reason for it," she warned, swelling with modern revolt against the endless

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

chain of transmission as a human objective,
"I shan't agree with you."

"I shouldn't in that case be agreeing with myself," I conceded. "If there's a bigger thing than children to draw man to woman, there's a more compelling thing, if it arrives, to drive them asunder."

"You admit, then, that there are reasons why marriage need not inevitably be permanent?"

"I admit," I said, "a reason."

VIII

ALL the things that marriage ought not to do for us may be gathered under the one head of not discrediting our social values. This is the sole criterion of particular marriages with which society has any concern—are the parties to it worth more or less to us? What goes on within the relation, by what modes, what vital play of personalities, the human factor is raised to its most serviceable exponent we have not even to question. But we may, and must, question the result as it is returned to us in terms of social service.

Nature has experimented with matings a thousand ways across the field of life; welded the essential elements in one, divided them, united them in ephemeral

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

tragedy, swept the respective instruments apart through wider and wider ranges of unmatched experience, brought them together for longer and more complicated contacts. And through it all the one determining process which we perceive, though the end escapes us, is betterment. The Soul Maker has matched love and death and love and happiness; but neither death nor pleasure has been anything more than the preferred instrument. It does not become us, then, to elevate happiness to a degree beyond the eternal mark. It is important only to the extent that it raises the personal key. We are entitled to as much of it as permits us to make our contribution at its highest, but we are not entitled to it on any other grounds. The augmenting power of happiness in the plane of human endeavour is tremendous, but some great souls have been able to dispense with it altogether.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

The impossibility of standardising the condition called happy would alone establish its insufficiency as a social criterion of marriage. It means too often that combination of circumstances which favours our weakness, ministers to our vanity and asks no embarrassing questions. It means sometimes the accidental avoidance of distressing incidents, accidents of sickness, death, poverty, which may lie wholly without the sphere of personal control. It may mean, for a woman, being maintained at a given economic status; it has meant for men to maintain themselves at an unbroken level of male egotism.

One way or another, half stated, overstated, instinctively felt for without being stated at all, an idea of a higher objective in marriage than personal satisfaction, has coloured all our judgments of marriage in general. It has been the one argument which

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

has sustained itself from generation to generation, in the long struggle over the sequestration of woman. Restraint has been condoned on the ground that it enhanced the quality of her racial contribution. She has been held to be recompensed for her withdrawal from community activity by what she has thereby added to her husband's personal index. The idea of social equivalence has been, and is still, the sole extenuation of the great passions of romance. What is needed now is to bring it home to the particular instance as the one determining condition of successful mating. "For better or worse" in the marriage service was intended to emphasise the spiritual values of marriage by making it superior to things, but no one has a right to *become* worse by marriage. The eternal debt which man owes to society is himself; he cannot give himself wholly away, even to the lovely lady,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

nor is woman to be wholly had for the asking. Marriage between the two who entertain it is a sex question; between them and the community it is a question of social efficiency.

§

In view of the incompetence of our mating methods, even with the best intention, it is unavoidable that many marriages should fail of permanence. It is even desirable. No one has the effrontery to contend that marriages which produce criminals, degenerates, drunkards, epileptics, have any social right of continuance. From no quarter is there opposition to the dissolution of any union which makes of a clean, strong woman a contaminated and contaminating wreck. We go so far in our appreciation of the social menace of such matings as to undertake to legislate against their in-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

ception. We can go further, and by rational prevision of marriage do much to obviate the social waste of weariness and disgust, of sensuality and selfishness, of opposing aims and irreconcilable standards. But the limits of human foreknowledge make it improbable that mating will ever be uniformly successful at every attempt. The time will come when the notion that such mating misadventure should be pronounced incurable will rank with the superstition which made an impiety of enlightened surgery.

§

What is necessary to establish the social criterion of divorce is a revision of our whole way of looking at it. It is assumed now as an infringement of a code; it is undertaken in the same spirit and before the same tribunal as a criminal offence. What it should really be is an inquiry into

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the advisability of two people continuing to live together. Instead of a judge to render decisions in accordance with law, there should be a commission of marital welfare.

Divorce is an evidence of failure to which society is an accessory, nine times out of ten more culpable than either of the unhappy parties. It is important that society should be fully informed, should not be allowed to escape complete knowledge of the cause and occasion of such failure. Social conditions tending widely to disrupt families deserve at least as much social consideration as the hookworm or the city sewers.

For this reason alone divorce should be simple; stripped of every inducement to conceal the true grounds in favour of a particular legal quibble which the parties have agreed upon will get them off safest with the court. Not even the generous impulse of right thinking people to

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

obtain divorce by the method which will leave the other least damned by it should enter here; nor the other equally human impulse which would leave the offending party as much damned by it as possible.

Divorce should be easy of access; approachable as soon as it becomes desirable, not delayed until some flagrant offence involves the mismated pair in mutual accusation and recrimination. Whatever the process, it should not be of a character that requires "working up" to—the creation of hysterical states as an anodyne to the social reprobation which must now be undergone on the way to freedom.

And the first step toward the reform of our methods of divorce should be the abolition of newspaper publicity. The dissolution of a marriage should be, in respect to the parties to it, as private as a surgical operation. In respect to its social aspects, as

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

accessible as the report of the census. For there is no better test for the validity of any given social condition than its reaction upon the integrity of marriage.

In the recently established Court of Domestic Relations we have the beginnings of a proper tribunal; but it should have been named Domestic Adjustments, for what its transactions have revealed is that, more than in any other department of life, we have been thinking of marriage in terms of a class. Our attitude toward it has largely been determined by the notion of a kind of sanctity of the personal experience. Interference and compulsion from the outside, say the ideal makers, are impossible, since the very act of appeal to such outside compulsion means the destruction of the bond.

As a matter of fact, the Court of Domestic Relations, with the aid of a probation officer, mends about as many marriages as

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the civil court dissolves. Nothing is so certain as that a great many matings fail because the parties to them know nothing about marriage, not even their own; and, though it is not to be learned in the same schools, it is just as possible for a third person to know what is radically wrong between you and your husband as between the left lobe of your brain and your motor impulses. In all the ages that men and women have been living together and rearing children, a few things have transpired which should be as much a part of the general knowledge as the rule for long division. Yet it is written large in the proceedings of the Court of Domestic Relations that marriages fail on every hand for want of just such time stamped certainties.

Nothing in the proceedings of such courts, taken with the tribunal for juvenile delinquents, has been more illuminating than the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

total failure of our religious and educational systems to provide any reliable criterion for the masses in the business of living together. It is possible in New York for parents to provide their children with any variety of free medical attention, to have them taught the violin and hand embroidery, or to secure at the public expense training which will enable them to make a living on the vaudeville circuit. But they cannot obtain for themselves advice or assistance in the most important relation in life, except by application to a court which is compelled to regard such application as the public confession of offence. It is this element of publicity and reprobation which renders the resort of unhappy people to the courts unlikely until the trouble has reached the acute, and possibly incurable, stage. Privacy and simplicity are the absolute conditions to be insisted upon in any effective

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

dealing with the social evil of disintegrating marriages. The whole ground of our estimate of divorce proceedings must be shifted from the implication of offence to the more hopeful one of falling short. Fruitful, life-long mating is an ideal which is to be tried for under conditions which will render the failure to attain it something less than discreditable. No human relation can long maintain itself with dignity that does not permit the possibility of going out of it erectly.



Valda was divided between the suspicions that, though all this was very advanced, it was also likely to prove very upsetting.

"It destroys," she concluded, "nearly all the admitted grounds for divorce, even the most ancient."

So far as an isolated act may constitute

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

"grounds" it does; but in its implications, in the violence it does to the essential relation, in its capacity for rendering the union inutile, almost any act might be a good ground, or none at all.

The true objective of divorce is not the dissolution of particular marriages, but the establishment of the highest possible grounds upon which people may continue to live together. The relief it affords is of an extremely limited character, since, while it frequently makes way for another and happier marriage, the scars and ruptures of such social surgery would tend to unfit one for the happiest.

The two elements of mate-love which form the basis of institutionalised marriage are intention and potential permanence. In so far as either of these is imperilled by voluntary acts, society is concerned with them. But we must deal with facts rather

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

than ideals; all about us marriages are maintaining high standards of efficiency under conditions not at all in harmony with our personal predilections. What we have to ask, then, confronted with a specific occasion which does not fall in with our notion of what marriage ought to be, is not in what wise it fails to conform, but to what extent it threatens the permanence of the tie or the quality of its intention?

All successful marriage is in the nature of an achievement; whether it is done at white heat by the transmutation of personality in passion, or nobly reinforced by the intelligence and the will, it represents a series of progressions. Every new phase of parenthood and mutual adjustment has its separate unfoldment.

By the element of intention I mean the will to hold fast through every phase to the uttermost that marriage can do for us.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

Without it marriage becomes a futile and foolish affair and ourselves mere puppets of inclination. It must be borne in mind that, so far, life has not proved it more than a happy accident that some marriages proceed to their ultimate goal without apparent effort. It happens, but it does not happen often enough to justify us in establishing it as a standard. What is more likely from the evidence at hand is that love which must occasionally be defended from our weaknesses does rather more for us.

It follows, therefore, that ground for dissolution of a marriage cannot be based upon specific acts. Particular unions may fail and fall apart before occasions which by others will be triumphantly survived. Any condition which renders the marriage a social menace, such as the discovery of taints certain to prove prejudicial to the young, should call for annulment on demand. But

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

offences of one party against the other can scarcely be categorised.

Failure to provide cannot be argued except under conditions which render it difficult or unwise for the wife to provide for herself. In so far as men commit themselves to a state of society in which the self-supporting labour of women fails of its due appreciation, they are bound to make support an item of marital obligation; but there is no natural excuse for it other than the pre-occupation of the woman with the bearing and rearing of children.

Neither can infidelity as an unrelated act be accepted as valid ground of social compulsion. Not at least so long as society commits itself to the manner in which the act is historically conditioned. It is in its reactions upon the relation which it affronts that its offensiveness consists.

Whenever unfaith appreciably weakens

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the spiritual quality of an existing tie, in as much as it involves either party in new and conflicting responsibilities of parenting and maintenance, it becomes a consideration of the Commission of Marital Welfare. The disturbances of the maternal function incidental to jealousy and doubt, constitute a practical objection. Chief of the requisites for successful mothering is stability.

Sex relations must serve the purpose of sex. That is to say they must serve eternal, racial purposes. All human experience goes to show that, whenever they are made to serve other or temporary exigencies, the result is racial deterioration. The supposition, loudly insisted upon in some quarters that, when the two doors of exit and entrance to marriage are both of them wide open, nobody will go in or out of them for any reason except love, is made without knowledge. The more complex civilisa-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

tion becomes, the more likely people are to be led into sex relations as into any other from motives of private gain, as a relief from boredom or temporary want. Time out of mind, men have used sex influences for purposes of social and political ambition, or to prey upon one another for food and entertainment.

It is not therefore as an act that infidelity comes under the ban, but in as much as its occurrence betrays the marriage as lacking in the true racial mark. It constitutes a denial of the element of intention in the particular instance. To admit relations without intention is to open the way to marriages in which mate-love is a secondary item or not an item at all.

§

It is not however on the grounds of divorce that public opinion is acutely di-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

vided. Marriages in which the unsatisfactory elements can be reduced to "complaints" are in some fashion remediable. It is around the problem of dissolving the marriage which has failed of no visible condition but only of its vitalising spark that argument is locked.

The right of society to exercise restraint upon the too casual dissolution of marriage is conceded in the degree that we are committed to the social control of the mating impulse. The purpose of marriage being conceived of as racial as well as personal, the urgency with which it is desired and the reasons named for its discontinuance must take their place not as prime causes, but as factors establishing the probable result. It is not what leads up to the demand for divorce, with which society is directly concerned, but what is to flow from it.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

Those who admit divorce at all are willing to agree to it when both parties can demonstrate a loss of social values. What they balk at is the opening, which any freedom of divorce allows, to the possibility of its being thrust upon us. It has taken centuries of experience to realise the affront to the Soul Maker in marriages enforced; in truth, but a small part of the world has learned it. Here in our quarter of it we are blinking the whole problem of divorce in the effort not to be brought face to face with the legal violations of a marriage which, for one party, is still answering the soul's extremest need. This is the point about which we beat with a great flourish of noise and false faces, like an ancient Chinese army. Women, who defend themselves by instinct and without organisation, go trailing wings about it in every direction but the one in which lies the crucial ar-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

gument. Divorce for a cause or no divorce at all were a simpler matter than the social determination of a relation in which one or the other of the two protestants must suffer immense and irreparable damage.

§

Chiefest and most overblown of the arguments flourished before the citadel is the institution of the family. Not only is divorce supposed to operate against the particular family, but it is held that any increase of facility will tend to undermine the security of the family in general. All of which rests on the unargued assumption that the family is an institution, and that the whole fabric of civilisation rests upon it.

The relation of parents and children in a disrupted marriage is undoubtedly one of its acute problems. The right of the child to the care and love of both parents, the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

likelihood that the parents with a full knowledge of the child's heredity will prove the best guides for it, are considerations which enter so deeply into the particular problem that very few people will be found to undertake divorce except after having given these points their utmost consideration.

Theoretically, the protestants should make any sacrifice of themselves to preserve the due environment of the child. Actually, complete immolation of the parents does not invariably work out to the advantage of the offspring. The lack of standardisation of parental influence, still more the lack of reliable data as to its value in the child's life, prevent us from doing any more than merely making it out as a most serious consideration. At best the problem of the children must always be a particular problem; but the argument for the preservation

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

of the family as an institution rests under no such disability.

§

The coherence of the mating pair and their offspring is a natural animal grouping common to the higher species. It endures ordinarily through the dependency of the young; in man it is continued beyond this natural period by affection and self-interest.

The effort of the Soul Maker to emphasise the family tie by prolonging the period of dependency in human young, seems to say that there is something to be got out of this binding of the consanguineous group not collectible from the purely social organisation. But, when we think modernly of the family, we assume it to mean those consanguineous members who live under one roof, with one common source of support; thus by our ordinary speech betraying

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

that the constituting fact of the family is not kinship but property. A man's family are those of his blood who may inherit his houses and lands.

Originally the term was wider, more sincere. It was used to define a group gathered about one dominant male, or occasionally even about a woman, and consisted of wives, concubines and their children, slaves and hirelings. Its principle of coherence was admittedly protective and industrial. Some semblance of this ancient group still survives in countries where the industrial conditions make it necessary, or where property, raised almost to a degree of sanctity, is preserved intact from generation to generation. But everywhere the condition of inheritability is the determining one. An individual adopted into a family by a legal process becomes a more integral part of it than the direct descendants born outside the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

bond. Not a man's son, not even the first-born, is a member of his family should his mother have neglected the legal formality which makes him an heir. The woman herself, though she give children, passion, service, does not herself by that alone become a member of an institution we are occasionally moved to describe as sacred.

But there are other ways, beside the conspicuous and cruel neglect of illegitimate children, in which the preservation of the "family" is rendered ridiculous as an argument against a possible neglect of the legitimate through divorce. For there is no evidence in history that society has ever cared for the family at all; it has cared only for particular families, propertied families, those of our race, our moral status.

We have never hesitated to break up a family when one member of it has incurred the deep displeasure of society by what, at

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the particular historic period, is known as a felony; there have been times when we have done it for the theft of a loaf of bread. It is done still in some countries on a pretext as slight as a political opinion. There are people living in America who can remember seeing whole families broken up and sold like cattle because they happened to be of an unfortunate colour. We carried our inconsistency at that time so far that we even permitted the sacrament of religion to matings which were afterward violated to meet the financial exigencies of the dominant race.

It is only recently that we have come to such an appreciation of the value of the family that we are realising the social waste involved in allowing a particular family to be broken up by the accidental death of the breadwinner. Until the last two or three years we had no provision other than pri-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

vate charity against this, the most common cause of dissolution. The maintenance of widows with dependent children out of the common fund is the first definite step toward placing the family in the position of prime importance which we theoretically assume for it. We still consistently neglect the two greatest factors operating against the continuity of family ties—war and poverty. War is a two-edged sword cutting both ways into family life; it decimates and prevents. Poverty is a disease, gnawing always at the props of life.

Prevalent as divorce threatens to become here in America, it does not yet so much menace the family as does the forcing of bearing mothers into mills and factories. The possibility of it does not lie so heavily on the soul of mate-love as a long, steady fall in wages. So long as society passes over in indifference or silence these two great

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

deterrents of family efficiency, it cannot with any success raise the standard of the family against any proposed changes in the prevailing modes of marriage.

The family still does, in a material way, what it can for its young; but there is a growing feeling that the young should not be left at the mercy of the family whenever it fails of a certain minimum standard. Actually no man educates his young independently, nor medicines them when they are ill, nor teaches them his trade. Rather, the whole movement at present is toward the familisation of the state, an ideal to which any emphasis of the consanguineous group is opposed. The wide conviction of the inadvisability of inheritable wealth strikes at the one point which made the institutionalisation of the family possible, and tends still more to restrict its social service to the uses of affection.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

It is probable that these have been greatly underestimated. Love is a force, not only between man and woman but between parent and young. It is the catalyser of the constituents of personality. It plays an undeniable, but not clearly determined, part in physical vitalisation. Unlicked lambs will die, and babies require to be held and comforted. Almost any kind of parent is better than an institution for very young children.

We do not know enough of these things to speak with authority, but we know enough to be certain that the element of divorce which renders it a grave social consideration, is not the violence it does to a legalised institution, but to the affectional life of children.

This is at least a simplification. We must keep the rules of the game, even with our sons and daughters. Fair play forbids that

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

we should rob them of their prerogative in the interests of personal passion.

"You mean," Valda questioned, "that we mustn't deprive them of the chances of natural affection for the sake of a happier relation for ourselves?"

"Not when such relation is the sole objective of divorce. When we have elected to serve the race with children, we are at least obligated during the period of their dependence, to see them through, even if it should involve the temporary submergence of our own sex life. Love is important to life; so much so that it cannot fairly be sought at the expense of the love-life of others."

Valda sat a long time without lifting her eyes from the green reflections in the water that slipped so mindlessly over the polished pebbles of the brook, and when at last she did so I saw that what she had been seeing

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

there were some of the reasons why I had led up to this point so carefully, and why spoken as I had in the beginning of the outcry about the preservation of the family, as cover—a screen between the sore issue of the subject and our profoundest human reticencies.

§

We are reticent because we do not yet know what we think about the propriety of divorce by compulsion. If divorce is to be admitted at all, it cannot be denied to two people both of whom desire it and have already satisfied the demand of society as to the welfare of the children. But when it is sought by one, what shall be done for the other to whom it is the stripping of the tree of life, the soul's utmost indignity? To a certainty this cannot be settled by opinion, still less by the opinion of the few who write

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

of it, often men and women of creative minds in whose lives sex has values and connotations unknown to the masses. And if not settled by them, assuredly not *for* the articulate few without reference to the many in whom the protest of nature against any defection of the mate is as violent, and possibly as instinctive, as against compulsory mating.

I said possibly, as a concession to our lack of information; personally I believe that the tie which comes into being in the exercise of mate-love is real. Women believe many things about love which they need no science to confirm for them, and lack figures for expressing what in moments of blinding vision is perfectly clear to me—that there is in right passion a welding of personalities that, however insensitive it may become on one side or the other, can never be done violence to without working serious damage

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

to the love-life of both parties. It may wither and die between them, but, so long as on one side or the other it throbs with the pulse of life, any rending of its fibres must be felt to the centre of vitality. So many instances come before me, as I write, of the working of this hypothesis that I am restrained from offering them only by the certainty that it requires more than one lifetime of observing to establish it. I record it here for a profound personal conviction which time may witness to us. But if I admit that the damage to the one who goes, in any partial failure of the bond, is not wholly proven, the injury to the one who is left is in quite another category.



Violence to the love-life of women is likely to be the occasion of more serious so-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

cial loss than is the case with men. Even in its most joyous hours there is a shadow cast on woman's love by the pain of bearing. She is bound up in all her spiritual progressions with processes of physical reorganisation. Love in man may change his relation to society, but in women it changes the woman.

Probably many of the values we attach to virginity in women are factitious. They derive from an earlier feeling of property in the person of women, and have to do with her marketable values. But there is no blinking the fact that an experience of marriage and maternity extending over a considerable period of her life, sensibly lessens a woman's chances of entering upon a second such experience successfully. Moreover there are possibilities, incident to child-bearing, of becoming more or less incapacitated not only for new relations but

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

for independent, self-supporting life on her own account.

More serious still is the disappearance, through marriage alone sometimes, but very widely through child-bearing, of those secondary sex characteristics which are the advertisement of mating fitness.

Every year as the sun climbs up the zodiac it brings back to tree and flower, to the bright feathered tribe, to antlered buck and spotted doe, the efflorescence of mating power. The voice of the forest is tuned to song, the dance begins, love is made anew for every creature except man.

Not only does nature not bring back to the female of that species the blossom time, the curving lip, the unconscious invitation of the eye, but, once mating is accomplished, there are definite psychological tracts which may not be re-entered. We are so accustomed to this, we associate it so instinctively

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

with the sobering cares of housewifery and the dimming effect of age, that we fail to realise it always as a stupendous biologic process. To the primitive woman nature gave but one mating season; and all that mating fails to accomplish to cut her off from any revivification of its characteristic phases is done for her by maternity. There is no more return to it than its rosy hour may return to the shed petals of the rose. We must look steadily at this if we would see it whole. The modern chivalrous respect for all maternity as a racial service can be traced unbrokenly to the plain animal recognition of it as a natural bar to mating solicitation. Free association of the married of both sexes is made possible by something deeper than a conventional respect for a legal bond.

It is not the vow they have taken that keeps married women from coquetry, but

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the disposition they take on with being rightly married. And for the great majority of women this reorganisation of mating capacity is permanent. They may marry a second time for companionship, for support, or for the mere exercise of self-abnegation, interrupted by the loss of the mate, but the vast majority of women have been, and still remain, incapable of more than one true mating.

The difficulty about getting this recognised as an important item in considerations of divorce is due to the fact that in the numerically small class of those who read books about sex, or write them, this is not the case. The age-long struggle of woman to maintain herself by means of the effect she produces on man has led to an extension of her capacity for orienting herself in the region of his desires.

She has learned not only to preserve the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

bloom of her body long after its primitive term, but has achieved the impossible by safeguarding, in the midst of surrender, some untouched surfaces. In particular instances she has out-distanced the Soul Maker and set for our daily mark what was once the supreme, fleeting moment. Which does not entitle her, however, to the last word in establishing the general code. The increasing number of women to whom a break in marriage would not spell overwhelming disaster does not diminish the present certainty that a system by which divorce could be secured by one party without respect to the inclination of the other, would lead to enormous social waste and loss.

§

What we have here is the groundwork for placing in the hands of woman the determining voice in any projected divorce

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

which is not incited by offence and has for its objective the reorganisation of sex relations. The love-life of women is, in view of their potential maternity, of more importance to the community than the love-life of men. Now and then there has arisen across history a male whose gift is of a surpassingness that exceeds the social worth of many inconsiderable women—fortunately the sort of women exploited by men of genius has almost always been inconsiderable—but probably any competent mother of children is always worth the sacrifice of an average man. This is a point so generally conceded by the average man himself that he will make us no trouble about it.

Although it has been from time to time overlaid by the postulates of religion, the criterion of social worth for all sex relations, whether to be entered upon or discontinued, has prevailed in our general prac-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

tice. The final question which we have put to any irregularity of any notable citizen is, not to what degree it conformed to the marriage code of his day, but to what extent did it make good. It is not even, how much did it bring him, but what did we get out of it. Immunity from reproach is purchased by acceptable contributions. We judge our neighbours of today by conformity or unconformity, but the judgment of time is that any sex relation which adds to our meagre human equipment is moral, and by as much as it withdraws from the general fund it constitutes itself immoral.

§

"I think I understand," Valda admitted at last. "You mean that more things than sex enter into marriage, and that these have still to be reckoned with even after sex has ceased to be an active agent in the affair."

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

"That, too; but even more I mean that, so long as sex is an active agent on one side or the other, it must come in for active consideration. It *is* in, since love is not so easily done away with by the saying so; it goes on, even when wholly disregarded by the object of it, affecting the social values of the lover. Speaking for the social body, I give due credence to your statement that you cannot continue in this marriage without suffering personal inconvenience, but if the condition of your going out be that the other member is to be subject to personal loss, has not society a right to determine which one of you it will have upon its hands in a damaged condition? This, I take it, constitutes the chief right of society to a voice in the matings and unmatings of our kind, the fact that we have, as society, to put up with the results."

"You think that a criterion of love can be

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

established in its effect on our personal values?"

"If you assume the measure of value, as nearly as we can discover it, to be harmonious with the racial purpose, I do.

"It is the only test I have for anything. It is the dividing line in sex behaviours between self-indulgence and self-realisation. We've a right to as much love as we can work up into the stuff of a superior personality. Taking anything over what we can give back in some form or other to the social sum is my notion of sinning. I'd as soon think of anybody going about with a crippled love-life as with a maimed body or a depleted purse in the interest of my private gratification."

Valda sat perfectly still with her face turned away from me. The water went on garrulously to its appointed place, the kingfisher came back to the green room and the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

leaves of the rock maple stirred with the day's deep breathing as the feathers on a breast.

"I suppose," she said, "that they manage by not thinking of it," and I knew that her own thought was on the man who had broken her for the sake of an indulgence which, if it had been expressed in terms of money or ambition, he would indignantly have repudiated.

IX

I KNEW what was passing in my friend's mind because at the back of mine was running like the stream under the arched woodland the recollection of a talk I had had with Valda's lover before I had finally surrendered him to whatever use the gods have for the men of broken faith. It had been an interview charged with the profound irritation of being brought to book by the consequences of a situation whose primary excuse had been that it was not expected to have consequences, an irritation directed not so much at me as at the whole annoying tendency of human situations to continue to affect our

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

lives long after they have lost interest for us.

His sole contention was that he had loved Valda and now no longer loved her. He had initiated the relation, as I knew, on the assumption that it was to proceed by God's law superiorly to man's, and my disposition to consider the god in the case as something outside of and much more imperative than his personal inclination was the source of considerable impatience. The statement that I couldn't just accept the change in his feelings as an excuse for spoiling my friend's life, had been met with the amazed recoil of the reformer, invited to set in operation against his own impulses the strictures he has pronounced upon personal behaviours toward which he has had no disposition. The part which I wished him to play in order that Valda might get out of the situation without irreparable damage,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

involved restraints and repressions the mere idea of which occasioned in him much the same sort of pained astonishment with which the "business interests" had received his recent exposures of certain customary procedures of trade. It would have evinced, he was sure, a higher magnanimity in Valda if she had refused to let consideration of her own happiness interfere with his.

Almost as much, I conceded, as if he had refrained from letting his happiness interfere with hers. What I really wished to know was, since one of them must be sacrificed, on what ground he had decided that Valda should be the one?

"What it comes to," I insisted, "is that, in the failure of any sex relation, you propose to visit all the inconvenience on the faithful, the deeply loving." I was sure that was exactly what he meant because I

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

couldn't get him to agree to it in so many words. He talked instead of the high and sacred nature of passion, and of the impossibility of bringing it under any sort of personal control. Restraint was for emotions like envy or greed of money or love of power; it was indispensable to be put in force against persons of a strongly executive tendency who by the exercise of such gifts might become bosses or even capitalists. But restraint of the love impulses! It was plain to be seen that his intolerance of my position was subdued only by a due regard for my limitations. Love, he insisted, is indispensably and eternally free.

"Yes; but for Valda—how?"

I didn't expect any answer to that. There isn't any. All women know that once a woman has given herself to love she is never again entirely free. Therefore I was not unprepared for the diversion attempted by

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

insisting that if she truly loved him she would wish to see him happy even at the price of pain, nor did I think it worth while to explain that he had made this impossible by his attempt to thrust the price upon her. There is a place past all the boundaries of self where love may work the dissolving miracle and make us free indeed, but it is not reached by methods of the Reactionist. If Valda had seen him make a fight for her, if she had found him holding faith in the teeth of reluctant nature, she would have arisen on swift wings. Even if it were worth while hurting yourself very much for one who is willing you should be hurt, it is not often humanly possible. So instead of explaining that he couldn't logically demand so much nobility without having paid down something of that coin on his own account, I contented myself by asking, if love was so absolutely beyond human management and

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

direction as his theory postulated, what was poor Valda to do? He had an answer for me and it was entirely characteristic.

Said he, "She must learn to have more control over herself."

It was at this point I dropped him, as we must the whole theory of the "free" relation, forever and irrevocably behind us.



"And isn't there then," Valda took up the thought again, "freedom attainable?"

Not in the sense that it can be vested in one party to the adventure. The whole moral conflict of today is epitomised as the struggle for parity of rights between contracting parties; parity of citizens with governors, of employed with employers, of women with men. Unless this is a principle of human conduct, applicable to all varieties of human relations, it becomes a mere

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

social exigency, not worth all the fighting that is being done over it.

True freedom is not compatible with any sort of behaviour which has human damage as its outcome. Even the most anarchistic imagination denies the admissibility of love initiated by violence, which is exactly as logical as casting away by the sword. Once having made up your mind to inflict on another life an injury to give ease and satisfaction to your own, it is probably immaterial whether it is accomplished by one method or another. \ If you destroy me I had as lief you had done it for money passion or murder passion as for the passion called loving. The final account with nature and society has to be settled on the basis of the damage, and not on the excuse you can invent for it.

The answer then to the question as to what constitutes sex freedom is that there

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

can be no freedom *within* sex relations until we have achieved a degree of freedom *from* them.

So long as love is so important to us that it disorganises all our social relations, it has us by the throat.

The idea that there is something rather creditable in being so susceptible that you can't help yourself is a temperamental fallacy—it is just exactly as creditable as being so mad you can't help yourself, and there is no practical difference between the harm done by inordinate loving and that resulting from inordinate envy.

Loving is important, important in degrees and directions not yet fully realised; but a distinguishing species mark of man is that he is a social animal. We are male and female for definite, marked periods of life, but from beginning to end we are members of society. The due proportion

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

of loving in life is exceeded whenever, by its importunities, we are prevented from sinking the personal issue in the general good.

This is a hard doctrine to only two classes, those at the bottom of life in whom by whatever misfortune of inheritance or training the physical propensity exceeds the power of social co-ordination, and those along the upper fringe in whom an eccentric culture has bred a hypersensitive ego. In the great middle field marriage does actually serve the main purpose of living. Society is largely held together by the number of persons in whom loving has been partially brought under the control of the intelligence and will.

This is a state of things which must be taken into account; the everlasting stumbling block to the opponents of marriage by arrangement. The affections of good wom-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

en, and less freely of good men, are actually susceptible to the claims of worth and deserving. Women can love the mate; the father of the young becomes an object of solicitous care. No "village of a thousand souls" but can show you several instances of the power of women to gather up and hold, like a strong, steady lamp, all the offices of loving under the directions not of sex inclination, but of something which to them spells a higher form of compulsion.

This is the way freedom comes: to be able to walk with love but not be driven by it; to be able to hold sex impulses as we are learning to hold impulses of trade, subject to considerations of fair play and sensitive to the general social direction.

§

This demand for a relation by which the right of discontinuance can be vested in the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

unloving member, rather than in the faithful as the present usage places it, is, like the modern prevalence of divorce, symptomatic. It appears from time to time in those periods of history characterised by vast accumulations of wealth on one hand and practical or chattel slavery on the other, tending to raise barriers of class which operate against free mating selection. Clumsy and inefficient marriage modes, induced by such social disequilibrium, produce this inevitable reaction. All great revolutionary periods are preceded by laxity of sex behaviours, and in so far as the revolt tends to re-establish human values are followed by a return to more austere and simpler methods.

The same reflexes are noticeable in the decay of an existing religion and the rise of another. Not because of any prohibition which religion imposes, but, as will be

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

shown later, because of the attempt to make love-life fill a place which can never be legitimately occupied except by the exercise of the personality in its cosmic relations.

The claim, in so far as an ideal supported by so small a minority can constitute itself a claim, for a relation from which one party can withdraw without respect to the wishes of the other is, by and large, an evidence of imperfect sexualisation. I am aware that a statement controverting, as it does, a popular notion that all such demand proceeds from an excessive propensity, requires explication.

In general, the postulate of the free lover is a confession of inability to maintain the love-life of the individual in the absence of the only one of its elements which the constitutional "free" lover can appreciate, I mean in the absence or sus-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

pension of sex attraction. For the argument on which the apostle of such freedom rests his case is that sex attraction constitutes the whole of loving and is the sole criterion of mating.

If this could be established on the evidence of the Soul Maker, there would be nothing left for us to say. But an examination of the earliest manifestations of the habit of living together shows it to have been able to maintain itself not only in spite of the seasonal fluctuations of sex attraction, but in long suspensions of the act by which the continuity of the race is established. In the awakening states of consciousness, far from being an emotion superior to obligation, the chief service of love to life appears to have been to establish obligation. The prevalence of long mating periods in the higher species is proof positive that, in some way not perfectly clear to

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

us, nature was served by the association of creatures in pairs, independently of the procreating crisis.

Whatever this bond is, how compound of interest and association, it is, in the making of man, the object of quite as much pains as the brief period of secondary sex characteristics by which mating is initiated. It bids fair even among the brute species, if anything survives the assaults of dissolution, to prove superior to death itself. Instances of the death of one mate on the taking off of the other, even among lower animals, are not exceptional.

Full mating capacity, then, involves the ability to get something out of those phases of mate-love not directly induced by what we call sex attraction.

The attempt to centre marriage only in its active and obvious states, and to limit it to aspects of the relation admittedly and in-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

escapably fluctuant, amounts to a confession of shortage in the other offices of loving. Life laughs at the too fastidious faculty which is at the mercy of an unbecoming hat or a thick ankle, which grows hysterical at the idea of restraint, and is unable to maintain itself in any but "ideal" conditions.



But supposing that those conditions denominated ideal by the advocate of the unregulated relation should prove in harmony with the dimly guessed racial purpose, it would even more defeat his object. If you will talk very directly with almost any free lover, you will find that what he really expects of the free alliance is a state of things in which you are to be noble enough to let him go, should his happiness demand it, but he is not required to be noble enough to

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

stay, should your welfare be in question. It is expected to operate only on the one side of the unloving—for where indeed would be the freedom in a relation which left both parties free to decide what they would do about it? The only freedom which you retain, supposing you so unfortunate as to have given yourself whole-heartedly, is the freedom to give him up, which you had better do gracefully because in any case he means to leave you. It is necessary to state this colloquially in order to bring out the absurdity, the utter overthrow of the theory of the “free” relation.

For should this ability to surrender without pain have been attained at the highest spiritual plane, it is impossible that it should be so without a corresponding capacity for self-denial. To have reached a point where passion is so disassociated with the process of living that the object of it

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

can be given away without sensible loss is to confess oneself at a pitch of being able to dispense with a change of lovers.

The consistent free lover must hold himself ready to surrender his mate on demand, but in order that his social values shall suffer no diminution he must be able to do so without sensible bitterness or grief. This means that love must have entered very lightly into his life, or that he loves on so high a plane that he cannot consistently offer his personal feelings as an excuse for his own violation of the bond. A passion that is not vital enough to establish a claim to consideration on the one count can have none on the other.

Power over the faculty of loving is undoubtedly to some degree attainable, but there is no evidence that it does or should work only in the direction of unloving. The

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

clear definition of mate-love and its distinction from all the subsidiary issues ordinarily tied up with it, will operate to raise the plane upon which the personal problem is worked out, but it cannot alter the balance of the equation.

Admitting the general social good as the larger criterion of marriage, we can find but one righteous solution of the particular unhappy instance, and that is that each affair should be charged with its own consequences. And such consequences of whatever degree must rest equably on both parties; loving or unloving, control cannot justly lie in the hands of one member to the disparagement of the other. Where freedom is desired, they must come free together, for that is a mere travesty of liberty which in discharging the account of one member leaves the other bound to grief and humiliation. One may ask for freedom and

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

one bestow it, but neither may demand and neither compel. And this law of equity in loving must hold not only for the public, certificated relation, but for every kind of union between men and women as between men and men. It is not the spirit in which the adventure is undertaken, nor the incentive to it, which establishes the basis of its dissolution, but the contingencies in which it involves us.

This is the new morality of sex which has been worked out for us in a thousand departments of life which have no apparent bearing on sex, the morality of social consequence. A man is not free to deny his child on the ground that no child was wished, nor exempt himself from the broken life by explaining that no breakage was intended. This is the law of conduct worked out for us in battle where, though the risk is death, it cannot be wholly assumed by the widow

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

and orphan, worked out in trade where the maimed limb or the phossy jaw is not absolutely at the cost of the loser, worked out in labor where the blame of unemployment cannot be entirely imputed to the unemployed—the morality of the shared consequence.

This is the way to the new freedom when freedom is desired, neither to cheat nor to lie nor to compel, but to stand superior to the passions of sex as we are learning to stand free of the passions of trade and industry, and to play fair alike in loving and unloving.

Women—many large-waisted, clear-seeing women such as men think least about when they think of loving—know this way out; men must learn it. Although they do not know it, their feet are in the upleading paths, for love like empire, no more veiled and apart, must walk

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

openly in the streets of equality and fraternity.



The truth is that under whatever form, and with whatever high assumptions, every effort to dispense with the social restriction of mating practices is an effort against nature, an attempt to quash the element of responsibility. At one time or another in world history, every conceivable method has been tried of handling the inconsequent relation in an effort to reduce it to terms of social betterment. The Greeks tried it, spreading their loves to the light and air on a hundred altars; but though they dedicated their courtesans to the gods, even the Greeks learned that it is indispensable to have sons by chaste women. I am not sure that the evidence of history is not to the effect that money is the least corroding of

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the commodities with which we attempt to compound with the Soul Maker. It at least leaves us in the position of acknowledging the logic of the situation, which is more than can be said for the proposal of the radicals to put the care and maintenance of children entirely on the state, thus, by spreading responsibility thin, causing it to disappear altogether. What might come to the children from such an arrangement is a question that can be answered only after considerable experimentation; what would happen to marriage would be our final abandonment of it as a private and personal affair.

The moment that any pair completely resigns the issue of its mating to the state, it resigns also the right freely to mate and freely to bear. Between the two tyrannies of private indulgence and public restraint, marriage offers itself, a fair ground within

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

which the social right, though it may never be wholly intrusive, may yet never be completely excluded. It maintains itself as an institution by reason of its adjustability to the eternal, unavoidable sequence of love and obligation.

X

IT was after this session under the full-plumaged trees that we ceased to talk of the personal aspects of Valda's case. It had passed the point where speaking brings relief. The only unbearable affront is the inexplicable; the comfort of confession is the aid it affords to the understanding of disaster. We had talked her anguish down to that dull, unappeasable pain which makes the spirit gaunt, but in its fall we had weighed and measured it; it had taken its place as an appreciable quantity in the slowly righting scale of human equity. Because we had measured it.

This is the woman's discovery of the century, that woman's grievance and her right

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

take proportion, not from man's neglect of them, but from the degree of their consideration in the minds of other women.

From this time forth we talked of the future and what was to come out of it by the rationalisation of sex relations.

"Too much of a readjustment to expect it to come soon or suddenly," Valda was afraid.

On the contrary. What we are in need of most is to realise how close at hand the material for successful mating is. We are a phrase-ridden people. We are remanded by words into attitudes that have long ceased to have any relation to our activities. Many of our marriage modes are as empty of meaning as the before-mentioned papal hat. If any churchman in the world undertook to make his congregation think of what that first stood for, the police would arrest him. If any churchman attempted to in-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

duce the women of his congregation to stay "in the home" because of the primary reason which made it a proper place for her, he would be swamped in public indignation, he would have proven the absolute inutility of the institution for which he stands.

Women stayed at home primarily because, encumbered as they were with their young, it was the only place where they were safe from beasts, and they kept on staying because later when man advanced a little from his bruteness, it was the only place in which they were safe from men. This necessity of safeguarding women from predatory males made of the home a fortress and a prison. But now any young pair with a few hundred dollars can make themselves as safe as in a feudal castle, and not only has the actual residence of women ceased to be a subject of attack, but the individual female is, except by a small class and under

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

particular circumstances, no longer open to the possibility of violation.

It is this loss of the element of fear out of our social life which constitutes the most tremendous modifying influence in marriage modes. The number of places where, and the circumstances under which, women and children are safe increases daily. In general it may be said that it is eminently proper for women to go anywhere their young go, and that the safety and well being of the young are proportionate to the extent that the environment is mixed with woman thought.

What is important is to realise that this permeation of all the departments of living with the home element, that is to say the element of safety, is here and now.

In America the home, as a fenced-off, fortified, inviolable quarter, is practically non-existent. Instead of being a place within

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

which the activities of life are carried on in spite of society, it has become again the nest, the lair, the place of temporary withdrawal from the activities which life demands of us. The moment we cease talking about it in capital letters we see that this is so.

The extent to which the average citizen concerns himself about the inviolableness of the particular set of rooms which he occupies is epitomised in a burglar alarm and a second bolt on the front door. He is vastly more interested in making the street along which his children pass to school danger-proof. It isn't infringements of the rights of private domicile which agitate the working classes, they fought all that out some centuries ago. What they are really after is to have the factory and the shop made safe and unassailable. For if the home is no longer the centre of attack, neither is it, except on the farm, the centre of industry. It

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

is about two hundred years since it has been, for anybody except young children, the centre of education.

In view of all this it is time to stop sentimentalising about the home and fairly recognise the fact that the conduct of married life today is more largely conditioned by affairs outside the house than within it. Much of the modern friction of marriage is due to individual inability to realise this as a veridical condition. The ideal of the home as a high wall behind which the conduct of life should go on according to a set pattern, has crumbled more rapidly than the family relation has adjusted itself to the determining nature of the social claim on its individual members. And every department of family life has yielded to this readjustment more readily than that set of activities included under "domestic service." Whether performed by the wife or by sal-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

aried "help," these reveal a lack of organisation so demoralising that it has led to the home becoming not the safest, but in cases where it is not her own home, the least safe place for a woman. It is impossible to ignore the reports of morals courts and vice commissions on this point, namely, that the one occupation which furnishes the most recruits to institutionalised vice is the one which offers "a good home" among its inducements. Exposure to the temptation of loose living is one of "risks of the trade" of domestic service. If this be true it can only be because of the attempt to condition the life of the worker by her relation to the inmates of the house rather than by her value to society.



The moment we have worked out in human conduct the logical conclusion of the present situation we are face to face with the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

most tremendous factor determining the future modes of marriage. This "servant question" is a little door but it opens on a wide prospect. To admit, as we are being forced to do, that to prepare food for you under your own roof is in no wise socially or economically to be differentiated from preparing food for you in a factory, is to surrender the last claim to differentiate domesticity from any other set of industrial conditions. In other words, the mere circumstance of living domestically can have no logical effect on the value or classification of the labour involved.

We have already progressed so far with this idea that we are attempting to give expression to it in laws which compel the husband's recognition of the labours of the house-mother in the same terms in which the labours of the "hired help" are valued, but its implication is much wider than that.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

At its widest it is a recognition of the astonishing truth that the essential relations of men and women to society are not altered by their entering into sex relations with one another. Whatever was owed before marriage, of gift, of self-development, is still collectible and in the same coin. It admits no theory of substitutes. If children are your best, your supreme contribution, let us have them; in any case, children or no children, let us have the best of you.

All this is even more revolutionary than it sounds. For if men and women are in no wise differently related to society because they are married—men never were held to be so—what becomes of all the elaborate behaviours we have built up in anticipation of their becoming so? Up to this time all the education of women, all their premartial behaviour, has been conditioned by this assumption. All our fine distinctions as to

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

what was masculine and what was feminine were based not on observation of social or biological processes, but on the idea of the married woman's changed relation to society. By the condition of being lawfully married to a man she became organically connected with the world of thought and industry. In order that she might witness suitably to both relations she was trained from childhood in the attitudes proper to them.

But with the abolition of this left-handed economic and social relation, we have done away not only with the incentive for such posturing, but with its practice. The ways of the time are strewn with the sawdust of our inflated "wholly masculine" and "essentially feminine" stuffing.

In the beginning it is probable that the balance of preponderate traits between male and female was more simply and evenly

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

kept by nature. The law of inheritance which weaves across from father to daughter and mother to son has made for a generous transfusion of traits. But very early a preponderance was artificially fixed by the determination to regard marriage as a state of absolute economic limitation. Women, for no reason except that they were married, were thought of as having stated duties and functions; any capacity in excess of the requirement was suppressed, wasted, and thrown away. Any trait deemed desirable for the limited purpose of marriage was encouraged, or if lacking, was simulated. None the less certainly were men coerced and cajoled into the stereotyped male attitudes. The result is that we have very few women who know what a man really is, and fewer men who have any idea what a woman ought to be. All our intercourse is rasped by the exasperations of such

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

mutual misunderstandings. Choice of a mate is made not on actual correspondence of traits but on apparent fitness for an assumed state. Marriages fail, not because they fall short of any purpose of nature, but because either party fails to conform to the predetermined pattern.

In this mutual crowding of the sexes into utterly untenable attitudes, women have suffered most. It is natural that from women as a class should come the most spirited rebellion. It is purely incidental that the struggle has shaped about the contest for political equality. Under all forms, the right that women are fighting for is the right to be themselves.



It is immaterial now what the essentially feminine may prove to be—supposing that

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

there is a group of tendencies and capacities which occur widely and persistently enough in the female of the species to constitute a sex distinction.

The important item is that nothing should be assumed to be characteristically feminine merely because of its agreement with an assumed condition. Marriage is one of the activities of women and not a set mould into which womanhood should be poured. Whenever the fashions in which marriage is carried on become so straitened that they do not admit the whole of feminine capacity, they must be relegated to the scrap heap of all other outworn usages. But marriage cannot widen to admit woman with all her accretions of capacity without admitting a great deal more; it must be wide enough to accommodate the whole nature of man.

It is probable that the conventional attitudes of maleness which have been assumed

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

largely as a means of forcing a conventional expression of femininity on women, are no more truly masculine than timidity and cajolery are the true mark of womanliness. In admitting the social waste involved in the economic parasitism of women, we open the way to the suspicion of social loss in forcing on every man irrespective of his native capacity, the rôle of provider. Let women go on long enough in the way they are pointed, and the direct issue of their political right will be the recognition of the personal rights of man.

§

It is natural that we should first here in America arrive at the greatest discovery of the age, the mutual discovery by the sexes of reality in each by the other. It was here in the exigencies of pioneering that the posing and posturing of the sexes which

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

made the social mould of the last century in Europe, received their first sensible check. The enormous human activities upon which we are embarked, new ground to break, new cities to build, have to a degree removed us from the obsessions of the past. Women have been returned to the community of labour at something like their original and factual value. Absorbed in the struggle with virgin wood and unbroken prairie, we have been obliged to take our eye off the processes of civilisation for intervals in which, we have amazingly discovered, the vital functions of civilisation were capable of sustaining themselves whether we kept an eye on them or not.

Marriage has been going on among us as an ardent and productive activity, but by no means the only activity of our women, and the heavens have not fallen. There is no force operative in modern life so potent

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

to affect the fashions in which men and women live together as this shuttling to and fro of the thread of labour. It is the one thing which restores to us the advantage which our love-life might reasonably claim from sex attraction.

Sex attraction is the natural advertisement of efficiency in certain of the offices of loving. It is evidence of the ability to produce in another those high, electrified states of being under which it is desirable that mating take place.

The impossibility of reconciling this reciprocal force with the conventional requirements of marriage has led to its neglect as a mating factor, has brought it in some quarters into absolute disrepute. For the one thing which experience confirms to us is that sex attraction is not the advertisement of anything else.

In very simple social states, reinforced by

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

habit and self-interest, such mutual attraction may answer for all the social necessities of marriage; but among more complex personalities it can only be admitted as an indicator of those types among whom it is desirable to choose a mate. Out of all the individuals capable of setting up for us this primary appeal many will be found wanting in other and equally indispensable qualities. What one needs to marry is not a stock model of the opposite sex, but the other eye and hand and heart of oneself.

For when sex attraction has done its utmost for us, it is still left upon our hands to produce those correspondences of aim and ideal which render tolerable the obligations entailed by any surrender to sex. This is a task for all that we have of fortitude and skill. We unnecessarily and stupidly encumber ourselves when we add to it the necessity for matching all our human apti-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

tudes not to the aptitudes of the mate, but to a set pattern.

Marrying for sexual efficiency, that is, for the sake of the highest values which are within the capacity of loving to produce, rather than for social conformity, is only compatible with absolute freedom in the choice of labour. Of what moment is it, in the hours when we are not loving, in what capacity we are returned to the general use? Is it too much to expect that the hours of loving will be enhanced when each resorts to them from the work chosen by his soul rather than from a conventional employment?

§

Contrary to general apprehension, it is probable that the recognition of human efficiency as a thing apart from efficiency in sex will react favourably on the modal de-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

velopment of the family. It might lead even to a return of something like the ancient family group with its many minor individuals concentrated about one dominant personality, since nothing has so tended to disrupt this natural arrangement as the attempt to fix the headship of the group not in competency but in an artificially selected male, say the first-born of the first-born. All the bolstering of entail and primogeniture has not sufficed to make patriarchs of men whose only qualification has been that of being pater. No more has the convention of financial supremacy made the successful head of a family of one entirely devoid of financial ability. Homes have been broken up and children have come to public charity because of our persistence in this ancient fetichistic notion that the ability to make a business produce more than is put into it is an exclusively male characteristic.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

On the other hand, hundreds of families are going on successfully under the management of the mother on whom is placed the added burden of pretending quite otherwise. Not until we have fully realised that the essentials of marriage are at all times superior to the fashions by which it is expressed, will we be rid of the absurdity of attempting mechanically to co-ordinate it with particular ways of making a living. The only terms we have a right to make with marriage are that it shall stop short of unfitting us for the imperative obligations of loving and serving.



“But how?” Valda insisted. She had all a woman’s passion for explicitness.

Well—if we accept for a criterion the necessity of marriage to reinforce our human function and not to subvert it, we

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

have a right to demand that those who have our youth and education in charge will see that we do not come to marriage uninformed and unregarded. Education for marriage should at least rank with any vocational training, and the opportunity for free selection become as much a part of our social opportunity as the right of entry into any trade or profession. These are the things that should be as common as arithmetic. Individually we have a right to be guaranteed against the contaminations of disease and insured in the possibility of relief should the particular marriage, in spite of all our precautions, work out to the lowering of our social values. It is impossible that such insurance should not include the right to be maintained in a marriage as well as to be released from it, in the face of circumstances tending to subvert the social service of marriage in general.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

Beyond this it is difficult to say to what point we are justified in social compulsion. We have already fixed by implication the supremacy of love-life in women as against its importance to men, but the working out of this idea will be more by usage than by legislation. It is probable that, before we have made the valuation of home service in terms of classified labour a matter of common practice, the law will have to be invoked. This is a problem so mixed with the passion for property that something more is required than the consensus of opinion to put it in operation.

Two opposite influences are at work tending to modify the nature and extent of social interference with personal relations. One is the demand of the radicals for greater personal freedom, and the other is the steadily accumulating experience of the Court of Domestic Relations, which goes

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

to show that people require help in their matings as much as in any other department of life, and need often to have it applied with authority. So far the case of the radicals is all to win. The more we examine into the examples of free alliance which are offered us, the more they fail to exhibit either the indispensable social utility or anything which can be identified as the Soul Maker's mark. Happily for the issue, the consideration of marriage modes and moralities has passed the point where it is amenable to mere opinion. It is yielding, as far as things human may, to exactitude. No longer is it worth our while to hear the bishop on the divorce problem unless he can at the same time give evidence of more than his bishopness in support of his claim; knowledge of anthropology, of biology, of the history of mate-love, and the reports of the bureau of statistics. In every case, the-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

ories of love and marriage must yield to the growing certainties of practice.

§

"And the conclusion——" Valda at last ventured.

"There isn't any. Humanly, to conclude things is to drop them behind us. We of the dominant race have dropped polygamy, we are in a way to drop prostitution as soon as the conviction of its racial inutility becomes a part of our social consciousness. All the other things are problems of today or tomorrow, or at most the week after.

"We are unfortunate in that the most of the writing that is done about it is in the hands of the futurists, who, with the special case they make, are obliged to pitch the mark ahead a thousand years or so, and undertake to skip us into it. Love is Now.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

It is a force as steadily operative in human life, as susceptible to knowledge as any other of the great natural forces."

"But wouldn't that somehow make it less interesting, knowing about it beforehand?"

"Just to the degree that electricity has become less interesting since it has ceased to be a parlour trick. Love is for doing things, not merely for wonderment. It is time now to learn what things, and to leave off playing with it as children play with fear, pretending that it lives in the coal-hole of our physical natures, from whence it may presently appear to devour us. What really is in the coal-hole is the fuel of the flame that warms the world."

§

"That is all very well," said Valda McNath, "but what are we to do when the fire burns and nobody is warmed by it?"

XI

WE have to return from time to time to realisations of passion as a form of energy. It is set up within us and our brother the beast at the appointed time, without leave or knowledge. The procreant urge of the wild what time the sun climbs up the zodiac is not understood; it is probably not remembered; it is obeyed. It wakes, irrespective of the presence of the mate, and waking sets each ranging far afield to find the other. This is a fact, the whole bearing of which must be clearly grasped. The beasts which mate anew with each season, before the oncoming of their time are running singly or in the flock, the young males usually by themselves, the females with the brood mother,

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

and they set out to find one another. They go seeking and calling. They make a call they have not made before, and they answer to a cry they have not before heard. Traces of this linger in all the lore of early man. I know a little theme of four notes, played upon a flute of cane by an Indian lying out in the long grass at twilight—it is known as the “love call” . . . by and by the maid comes out to him.

This is as a thin line of light under a door behind which full understanding waits. Subtlest of the intimations of the approach of the crises of sex is the intimation of presence. Man or beast, the lover wakes to expectancy. At the set time of the year he walks in the trails and feels it following at his back; he turns and it is not behind him.

There is a phase of adolescence when all the world is in love without in the least knowing with whom it is in love. Romeo

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

thought it Rosaline until Juliet passed. For the man as well as for the race there is a period of passionate personification of star and moon and glancing water to satisfy this active suggestion of something alive, intimate, personal—out there beyond the rosy bush, at the next turn of the trail, within the shadow of high, wind-shaken boughs. If you have any better explanation you are welcome to it so long as you keep it in mind that the pairing of the superior species is not an accident of propinquity, but a business that requires effort and attention. The inexperienced and unremembering brute tracks the invisible presence until it brings him to the mate. Man, going further, finds God.

Let us agree to call that God which, unattainable by the sense, informs us from within of power and purpose. It is a convenient term and has the advantage of being

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

widely received. We have seen how love passes in man from the identification of the source of well-being with the person of the beloved, through the dramatisation of her worth in surpassing acts, to possession, to the establishment of permanence by withdrawal, and to the certification of the supernal quality of the experience in the offices of religion. This is the normal reaction of mate-love raceward. But there is another set of reactions which must now be taken into account.

"I worship you," says the lad to his first love. Exactly. There is no difference between the opening movement of right passion and the fulness of the heart which makes men to know that there is God, no difference between the initial awe and mystery with which he approaches an altar and the person of the beloved. He can kiss the place where she has stood as reverently and

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

get as much good from it as though it were the holy stone of Mecca.

The appreciations of sex awaken in adolescence, and, so far as we can judge in early man, about the same time as the sense of communion with—whatever it is out there beyond the end of knowing. They borrow phrases one from the other, not only in their initiative but for their highest, consummating moments. St. Catherine could find no better name for herself than Spouse of Christ, and the mystics pass in all their ecstatic states through the extended scale of passion. It is one of the evidences of the reality of both mysticism and passion that, in whatever lands and tongues, these states are identical. It is well known that in the lopping off of one or the other of these characteristic personal aptitudes toward love or religion, especially in the impressionable states of adolescence, the other is

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

intensified, may usurp the whole field of psychic activity. Your great religieuse might always have been a great lover. Pure passion of the heart in women tends naturally to express itself in the forms of spiritual communion, and in young men it prompts toward rectitude, toward courage and altruism with emotional impulses identical with those of conversion.

§

There is a third member of the triad which does not receive due attention, failing to manifest itself frequently in the determining quality. I refer to the creative impulse. This is likely to be ignored except where it occurs in a distinguishing degree, and then mistrusted because not understood. At its most universal it informs the nest-making activities; at its highest it gave us "Il Purgatorio." It is probably present in all

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

forms of extra-mating activity—the execrable verse we write to our young loves, the twenty unnecessary nests of the tule wren.

Although science has not yet agreed upon the service of such activities to sex selection, it has conceded their continuity with the forms we know as art; and artists themselves have witnessed their binding up with all the elements of devotion.

In the hands of its devotees the practice of any art tends to become a religion, formative and sustaining. Its revelations, as profound as those of the prophets, have the same quality of providing their own justification. Its unformulated, self-enforced demands are as imperative as martyrdoms; it has the same tendency as religious feeling to present itself in terms of personality, to get itself addressed as Mistress, Goddess, the Nine Muses, the Much Desired—

“Terrible as an army with banners!”

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

An inherited Anglo-Saxon prejudice in respect to the interlocking of sex and art puts us out of touch with essential processes. We would grant to the artist as an indulgence what we are wholly unwilling to allow him as a means of extending his capacity. I speak however of definite, related phenomena, as reducible by study as the evidences of will and attention—not only psychic states but pulse beats, temperatures, more intimate associative processes undergone in the realisation of a great novel or a great symphony.

Not only have we the evidence of history for the identification of the creative impulses of mind and body, but there are great ones living who, supposing you were in a position to put them to the question, would tell you more than you have the courage ordinarily to know. It is not, however, necessary to enlarge on the psychic points

LOVE, AND THE SOUL MAKER

of likeness between great love and great art, nor to identify the trails taken by the artist on the way to achievement with the path of the soul seeking the Most High. All this has been done for us in a dozen books, and though science has still some points to settle of interdependence and priority, at least that is an exploded theory which makes of any of them debased or perverted forms of the other. We are free to deal with them all as concurrent manifestations of augmented vitality, tending to raise the plane of human activity, expressible in terms and forms of one another.

§

There is another phase of similarity in those activities of love and religion and creative power which come in at the door of adolescence, not to be overlooked. They are susceptible of being played upon in the

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

same degree by all the sense perceptions and by rhythm and by auto-suggestion.

Mating in the wild is accompanied, perhaps accelerated, by beatings of the earth, by whirling flights, wing dances. In man these things are the accompaniment of awakening religious perceptions; we snatch at points of resemblance in Bacchic frenzies, in those white figures which flee forever around the red ground of an Etruscan vase. For the drumming of the partridge in the woods we have the drumming of the Soul Maker at the doors of consciousness. It is not always easy to determine what music is the food of love and what of religious ecstasy; and it is a matter of temperament whether the consciousness sensitised by line and colour leads to God or the mate. All old myth-making is full of this confusion of states and identities. In the earliest stages the god became familiar as the lover, later

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

the lover appeared divine, rendered unapproachable by a touch of Christian grace. It is a matter of individual gift whether creative power grows out of one or the other of them. We have periods of great progress in the arts of prayer and communion, periods of saint-making, and then a sudden florescence of art, the columns of Milan, the Sistine Chapel, the bright, hundred-eyed, peacock tail of Power.

So intimately are these historic incidents connected that it needs but the suggestion to strike them into order in your mind; but the point is most persistently missed. It is acknowledged across the field of human history, but on our realisation of it in the processes of individual living depends the right conduct of the love-life of the world.

§

It was the way of our fathers to attempt to regulate sex by relegating it to the back

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

room of living. But we shall get very little relief from the new fashion of setting it up at the front window so long as we continue to regard it as a thing to be considered in itself without regard to its derivations and directions. Sex is a form of activity, it has for its objective, reproduction and the raising of the human plane. It is commonly best accomplished by marrying and having a family. In the states of adolescence, however, and at the climacteric, sexual energy is naturally convertible into other forms, passes easily and without volition into creative processes such as have to do with the higher manifestations of consciousness.

In any wounding of its more usual function, the love-life of the individual tends to retreat into interchangeable phases of creative and religious life, is capable of becoming fixed in them past the likelihood of return. Conversely, morbid states of religious

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

emotionalism, and many futile and discommoding artistic aspirations, are resolved by a suitable marriage and the normal exercise of loving. Perfectly obvious conclusions all of these, and yet, singularly, seldom admitted to discussions of sex morality.

The difficulty with all our attempted solutions is that we are attempting to determine the problem of sex within itself. Like the lady of the zenana, when we have tried sitting on one side of the room we sit a while on the other. We shuttle between Spartan denial and the unregulated relation; debate wavers over the ground of guarded experimentation—but it is seldom distracted from the personal issue to the two doors on either side. Attention and reprobation are centred on an act. We recognise the importance of the premarital period to the extent of admitting youth to knowledge, but it is knowledge bounded

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

by the pathologist. We give them sex hygiene—of a sort. The mistake lies in supposing that, having done everything to render the young cautious, we have done anything to raise the plane of sex morality.

What we have done is merely to change the argument but not the fact of suppression. We afford no help whatever toward the realisation of sex as an active principal. I mean that we still offer nothing in the direction of higher standards of love living except the denial of particular acts under the extenuating term of self-control. But there is no element of control in our present method, for the whole idea and object of control is direction. The very use of the word implies, or should imply to any one with a conscience about words, something in motion or about to move. But applied to the education of the young in this particular

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

phase it means stoppage, complete inhibition.

This is a method which exposes the young to two dangers: first, the danger of accumulated repression, breaking out finally in excesses beyond all bounds; or the stoppage also of certain correlated impulses of adolescence important to preserve. Thus we come to marriage handicapped by habits of looseness or with appreciations dulled by long, unintelligent restraints.

The situation is still further stultified by the sort of assistance rendered to the individual struggling for such misprised "control," which ordinarily takes the form of suppressing the secondary characteristics of adolescence, the gaieties, self-dramatisations, swift explosions of energy common to youth. The success of the moralists has been too frequently the evidence of anemia.

And all this while nature has provided

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

two safe and productive shifts by which the developing consciousness is enabled to resist the importunities of the mating impulse. I mean by the transmutation of the energies of adolescence into religious exercises and creative art. The only aid which self-control can afford is in making possible such re-direction.

Observe that there is a difference between religion and religious exercises. Except in the case of one church which by ritual and symbol and the constantly recurring exercise of confession and communion manages to keep alive in its youth some active spirituality, the help that is afforded by established religion is slight. In most of our educational institutions it is confined to a perfunctory public service of prayer and song, and some denominational activities of a palely altruistic cast. It is possible to find ministers charged with the religious in-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

struction of the young who do not know clearly what is meant by a "spiritual exercise" and would be wholly incompetent to guide their charges to those high states of being wherein things otherwise unattainable come to pass. I have talked with such men and I have also talked with Indian medicine men who, when they go to prepare their young braves for the ordeals of chastity and endurance incident to their assumption of tribal responsibility, are far better acquainted with the psychic path by which the serviceable state of mind is reached. It is part of the immemorial knowledge of mankind that there are such states; savages seemed to have found their way to them as deer to old salt licks, by an instinct of self-preservation. The Christian Fathers found it through obedience and prayer; the individual artist has each his little stair by which he climbs to power.

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

In youth the way lies close at hand. That is why youth is the time for visions, heroisms, crusades, for the impossible, the patently absurd. The young heart fully exercised in these has little time for ranging in the streets of offence. Galahad was pure because he followed the Grail—he *followed* it.

Not only have we lost the use of religion in our educational life, but we have never had the practical use of artistry. The will to create begins to awake with the procreative powers of the body, but never since book learning began has it been legitimately satisfied. In the past much of the safety of women lay in the readiness with which they could turn to the making of fit and beautiful things, and sustain their newly awakened creative aptitudes by weaving fair linen for the nest, but modernly even this is denied them. This is one of the sources of that

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

reaction against schooling which is characteristic of adolescence. Young things turn from the accumulation of facts to the making of things, in the shop, at the spinning wheel and loom. But by degrees we have bent them, we have widened the capacity to assimilate and stunted the power to do. What graduate of our high schools can make any really useful or beautiful thing?

We surround our young with everything which tends to arouse and stimulate the correlated activities of sex, we wish them to know the best music, see the best pictures, to hear the most "inspiring" plays. The nest-making instinct is astir, creative impulse is at work and the end is futility. For all their "inspiration," they lead no forlorn hopes, serve no shrines, create nothing, dare nothing.

There is but one form of activity left for them; they can still have "affairs." The

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

way out into creative work and into the realisation of high ethical enthusiasms is hard for the young to find, we hedge it about with too many careful restrictions. But the way the body points is near at hand. All the books and the plays and the operas blaze that trail for them.



It is on some sort of deliberate redirection of the energies indissolubly associated with sex that the regeneration of our love-life must largely depend. And not only for the young, but for all of us.

In a world of machine-made things, where religion is reduced to a formula, lovers turn and rend one another, demanding what it was never meant love should pay. We seek wholly in passion an expression of what was originally intended as a prompting toward things made; we attempt

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

to get out of one another what is obtainable only by the personality in the exercise of its cosmic relation. And we know no better method, when one love fails to answer all these demands upon it, than to deny love altogether, or to snatch at as many others as possible. It is probable that we do not make enough of love in life, of its relation to all our activities and its power to affect them, but it is certain we make too much of loving.

Complete sexualisation should mean the power to range with some freedom through all the correlated and interchangeable activities of the mating impulse, recouping in each the possibility of especial disaster. Such power should enable us to await without capitulation the coming of the proper mate, or in any failure of the adventure it would mitigate against the use of violence in unavoidable partitions. And should no

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

mate be forthcoming it would enable us to return to society something like our full sex potentiality in other and acceptable terms. I go so far, indeed, as to wonder if, aside from its relation to reproductivity, the perception of Unrealised Good—the base of all religion—is not the root and stock of sex, and love and art sprung out of it, a red rose and a white, on either side.

Now and then some soul comes up among us, a tall and lovely shoot like the prophet of Nazareth, with no branching. That is why I am inclined to name the unrealised good as the middle growth, it is the only one which unaided of the others produces for us a symmetrical, fruitful tree. Art must still borrow of love and religion, and to live wholly in personal love is to incline toward decay. For sex is an active principle. It must work; forward into the field of life or secretly corroding. The best love-

LOVE AND THE SOUL MAKER

life is not necessarily the most loving, but the one which has the best use of love's activities.

Love travels toward a mark; we serve the Soul Maker most who travel with it toward its unimagined goal.

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